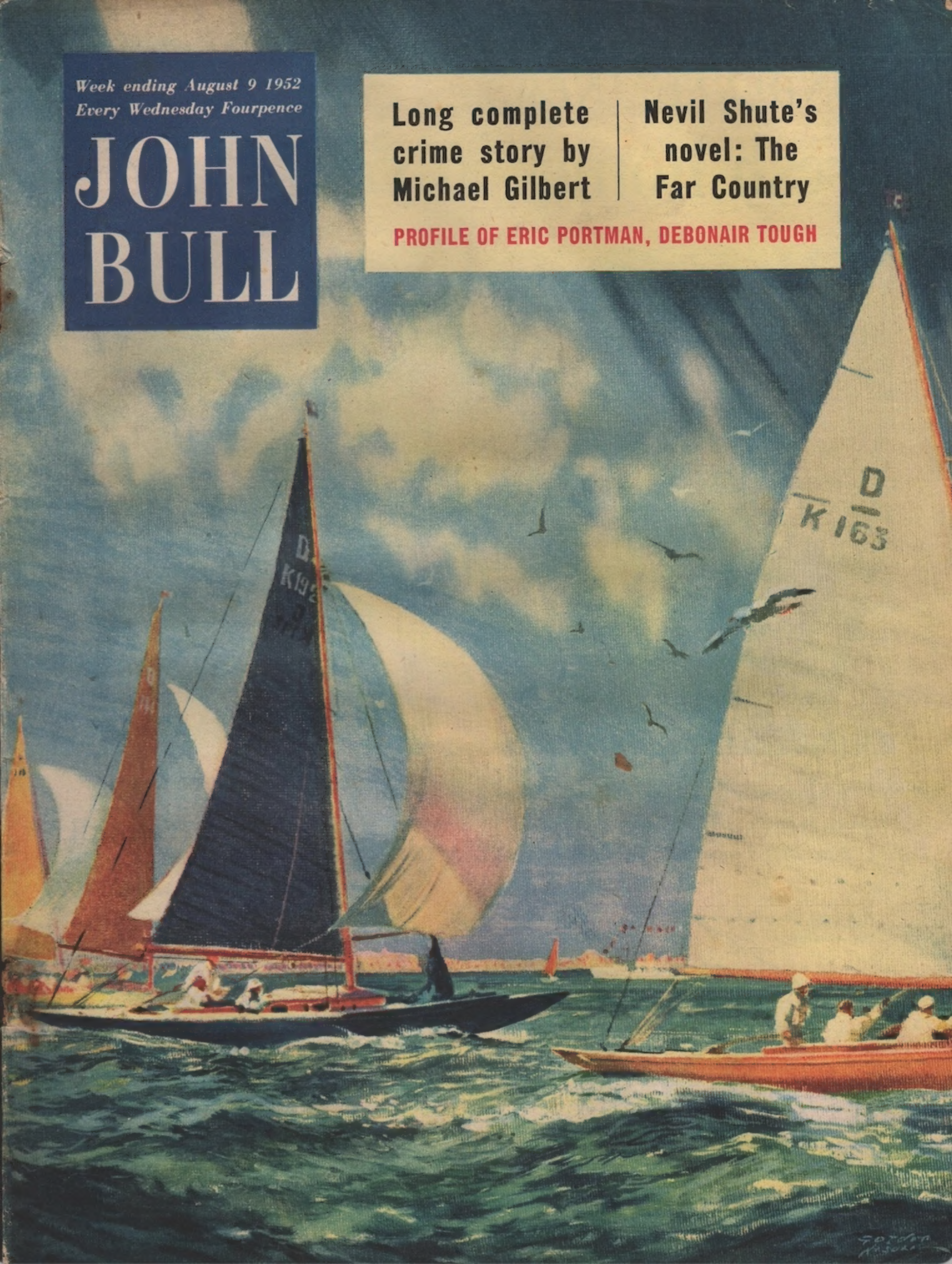
Week ending August 9 1952
Every Wednesday Fourpence

JOHN BULL

Long complete crime story by Michael Gilbert

Nevil Shute's novel: The Far Country

PROFILE OF ERIC PORTMAN, DEBONAIR TOUGH



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its healthy freshness
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Schools in peril

SOME 100,000 YOUNGSTERS are now on holiday from the 188 boys' schools and 150 girls' schools which, by a peculiarity of the English language, are known as Public Schools.

While they are enjoying themselves, their teachers are worrying.

"Every term it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain the public schools," says Sir Cyril Norwood, former headmaster of Harrow. "Education costs are rising all the time."

Other leading public school headmasters are equally pessimistic and foresee a dim financial future for their schools. Sir Cyril's solution is that the State should pay £50 a year towards each public school boy's education. That, he says, is what it would cost the country to educate the boy if he went to a State school.

ETON, Winchester, Harrow and Rugby all charge fees above the £300 a year mark. Parents of a boy at one of these major public schools must expect to spend—with the extras and special clothing required—at least £400 a year.

The cost of educating a boy or girl at even the least expensive of public schools is not far short of £300 a year.

How many parents today can afford from £5 to £8 a week for the schooling of each child? Not many, and this means that the *certainty* of a public school education is confined to the children of the comparatively wealthy.

IT is true that all these schools give scholarships. But they are few in number and usually inadequate in value. They do not give as equal an opportunity for all to get into the top-flight schools as there is today to go to a university.

The 9,000 children who will attend next term for the first time will nearly all come from "comfortable" homes.

There are one or two free places in some public schools which are given to the children of poor people. But often these do more harm than good. A boy from a poor home can easily be made to feel uncomfortable when he finds himself alone among hundreds with well-to-do backgrounds.

Some parents scrimp and save to give their children the benefits of having been to a public school. So that their son can have this social distinction they are willing to forgo holidays, a new house or a new car.

A member of the Royal Commission on Population gave as her opinion that the cost of education was the determining factor in keeping down the size of middle-class and professional families.

In a reaction against what they regard as this "educational snobbishness," others say: "Let the public schools all go bankrupt!"

BUT this would be a stupid waste of what are, after all, the best orthodox grammar schools in the country.

They have many of the best teachers. Their traditions of honesty and fair play are a valuable part of our national life. They have produced many of Britain's leaders and their methods develop responsibility.

Most of the headmasters do not object to the idea of a broader entry. They realize, as does Sir Cyril Norwood, that the public schools cannot exist much longer without some subsidy from the Government.

The whole public school system itself is in danger.

Is it worth saving? The overwhelming evidence is in its favour. In spite of obvious and irritating defects, it has served this country well.

WHAT is needed is for the public schools to develop along with the rest of Britain's institutions—including the universities, the Army and Parliament—from a stronghold of the privileged into a place where ability, not money, is what counts.

The Government would be widely supported if it combined action to extend this principle with reasonable financial help.

THIS WEEK'S COVER

ONE of the loveliest summer sights in Britain is the Cowes Regatta, which is now in progress. Yachts have been racing at Cowes—home of the exclusive Royal Yacht Squadron—since 1780. The boats in the painting by Gordon Nicoll, R.I., are International Dragon-class yachts. D.K. 192 is *Bluebottle*, owned by the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh—an expert yachtsman. Last year he won the Flying Fifteens event at Cowes.

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OH, ERNIE, I WISH I COULD BE STRONG LIKE YOU!
THEN TAKE MY TIP! START...
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It comes from wheat and malty-sweet barley *double-baked* into "chewsome" Grape-Nuts. This means Grape-Nuts are easily digested . . . quickly turned into energy. So give your family Grape-Nuts at breakfast and other meals, too!

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Free Speech

Fears that no child will confess

REMEMBERING the things that worried me as a child, and the fears I had, I was determined that my children should escape them. I insisted that they should bring all their troubles to me, so that we could discuss them and overcome them together.

Today, my grown-up son was telling me of some childhood fears he had, which he felt he could never confess to anyone. "But," he said firmly, "when I have children I shall see that they do not worry in secret as I did. I shall tell them to bring all their troubles to me." My mother did not know of my fears; I did not know of my child's fears. Will *my* child understand his children any better?—MRS. CECILIA OGNALL, 48 Kedleston Road, Roundhay, Leeds.

Smaller The Better

AROUND a dangerous pond on a local housing estate a three-foot chestnut paling fence was erected, to prevent young children reaching the water and falling in. Time after time it was broken down by bigger boys on their way to fish. After frequent repairs there was not enough fencing left to put it up again, so, as a temporary measure, it was re-erected only eighteen inches high. It seemed daft at the time, but it proved to be the most successful fence put up. Bigger boys get over it without damaging it, and the reduced height is quite enough to stop toddlers.—TIMOTHY J. SCULLY, 2 Drinkwater Gardens, Gaer, Newport, Mon.

Man Looks At Woman

YOUR correspondent was quite right in pointing out ("Free Speech," July 19) that a man's method of wiping dishes is different from a woman's. Similarly, in threading a needle, a man offers the thread to the needle, while a woman offers the needle to the thread. In lighter vein, a man looks at a woman from toes to head, whereas a

woman looks at a man from head to toes.—R. E. GRIEVES, 49 Lawrence Crescent, Dagenham, Essex.

. . . A man not only turns a dish upside down to wipe the underside, but gives the dish his whole attention. His mind is capable of only one train of thought at a time, whereas a woman does such jobs automatically, her mind soaring to things more worthy of her attention.—A. A. SOUTH, 37 Albany Road, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire.

. . . When striking a match, a man usually strikes it to him, whereas a woman strikes it away from her; but a man wrings a wet cloth away from him while a woman wrings it towards her.—J. H. ALEXANDER, 2 Leyham Road, Liverpool.

. . . The pewter "doubler" dish was once very popular. Meat was eaten from one side of it and the gravy cleaned up with a piece of bread. Then the "doubler" was turned upside down, ready for the pudding. I should think the Biblical reference to "wiping a dish and turning it upside down" meant using a dish of this kind.—MISS L. SCHOFIELD, 18 Sweet Oak, Triangle, Halifax, Yorks.

Shilling Night Out

MENTION of the celebrated Slip Inn at Manchester in Ted Ray's autobiography brought back happy memories for me. I was a regular customer there fifty years ago. I think, however, Ted was wrong when he said that the bloods of the city could take their girl friends to the Slip; so far as I remember, only men were allowed inside. There was one comedian engaged there who, whenever he was treated to a glass of whisky, would take a sip at it and then put the glass in the handkerchief pocket of his coat—a habit he had acquired through his glass once being knocked over. In those days you could have a good night out for a shilling. That sum would buy eight bitters—and the strength of the beer was very different from now.—JAMES FROST, 24 Grove Lane, Hale, Altrincham, Cheshire.

This week's instalment of Ted Ray's autobiography begins on page 19.

Dodging The Spike

THERE should be a law compelling men to carry their umbrellas straight down and close to their sides. So many

hold them on the crook of their arms, so that the umbrella point stands out, ready to rip the stockings of any woman within reach. Recently I saw a man talking to a friend on the pavement and swinging his umbrella in circles. No one could pass him without making a detour.—M. CLAYTON, 12 Westwood Hill, London, S.E.26.

Spinsters' Rejoicing

PERHAPS the question of equal pay for women could be settled by treating single men and women alike, but giving a substantial rise and a bonus to all men who marry. Just think of the rejoicing in the hearts of all unmarried women if such a decision were made.—PRIMROSE BULL, 9 Sunninghill Drive, Cavehill Road, Belfast.

Pet Into Pest

KEITH ELLIS'S article on Mr. Edwards, the pigeon catcher (JOHN BULL, July 19) reminded me of a stray pigeon we once found sheltering under our seaside hut. We fed him and made a pet of him. That night we found him in the scullery, roosting in a frying pan on a shelf, and by morning the shelf was in a filthy state. We could not get rid of him and, within a few days, he had found a mate. Between them, they fouled all the water in our tanks by roosting on the roof. I still love pigeons—but wild ones, and in trees. Mr. Edwards's work would have my full co-operation.—MRS. S. BENNETT, 8 Park Holly, Treswithian, Camborne, Cornwall.

. . . Mr. Edwards should be looking for a more worthwhile job. Surely the flour mill to which he rendered such valuable assistance could have solved its problem by putting simple netting guards over the open windows. Even the church is no sanctuary, it seems. The thought of that man creeping up in the dark for his wholesale slaughter makes me boil!—MRS. DORIS HAMBLETON, 11 Sunnyfield, Harpur Road, Brierlow, Buxton, Derbyshire.

Working Too Fast

HOUSES would be built more quickly if employers would organize their workers in age groups. I am a bricklayer in my early twenties, and for months now I have been working with men twice my age. The result is that I am repeatedly told that I must slow down, as I work too fast for them. Younger men should be put on to houses and essential factories and the older men on to less urgent jobs.—A. H., Woking, Surrey.

A Dog's Own Way

Spot, the persistent

WHEN my daughter was married last year, we decided that it would be unfair to unsettle her dog, Spot, by moving him. So he was left with me. But within a week he had found her new address (a distance of two miles) and, though I brought him back day after day, he was off again like a flash as soon as the door was opened. His persistence won, and my daughter decided to keep him. Now he visits me every evening after tea. Six o'clock finds him on the doorstep, ready to be petted and given a tasty tit-bit. Then he is off again. I always watch him cross the road and, to the amusement of neighbours, he turns round and looks back before turning the corner.—MRS. E. SPONG, 569 Burnage Lane, Manchester.

TV Sounds Louder

DIFFERENCES between the sound of a television set and an ordinary radio are even greater than your correspondent ("Free Speech," July 19) pointed out. Not only does a TV set sound much louder when heard from another part of the house or from the garden, but my husband, who is deaf, can hear a television set quite easily, whereas he cannot hear a radio set, even when it is at full volume.—MRS. N. M. TRANTER, Retnart, 26 West Town Lane, Bristol.

An expert comments: There are two principal causes for the TV set appearing to be louder than a radio set, when heard by someone not in the same room. Firstly, the viewer is concentrating on the picture and, therefore, is inclined to turn up the volume of sound, so that it can be heard clearly without giving it undivided attention. Secondly, the high frequencies used in television are much more incisive and penetrating than the lower frequencies used in sound broadcasting.

Paying Twice Over

WORKING excursion trains a round trip of 300 miles, and arriving back safe and sound, train crews receive no tips and expect none. I am a locomotive fireman and we take the view that we have done the job we are paid for. But when I returned from a coach excursion into the local countryside recently, the hat was passed round for the driver. Total in tips, for a round trip of fifty-eight miles, was thirty-eight shillings.—RONALD SMITH, 71 Upper Church Lane, Princes End, Tipton, Staffs.

Letters intended for publication should be as brief as possible and include the sender's full name and address. John Bull pays a guinea for every letter printed. Readers with personal problems should send inquiries (other than medical) to John Bull Free Advice Service with a stamped addressed envelope for reply.

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Millsom turned in time to see the convict swing the pickaxe. He had no time to save himself. It caught him squarely on the side of the face

THE SMILER

by MICHAEL GILBERT

ILLUSTRATED BY CASWELL

Like every crook, he had a weakness. His was a sense of humour

DID THE MAN HAVE A WEAKNESS? Millsom, who was a very experienced prison officer, and had spent six years of his service at the prison on the moors, stood looking through the inspection trap into the brightly lighted cell.

The man lying on the flap bed was a big man. He was bulky, but he was certainly not fat. The hand which hung down towards the floor was plumped with muscle. The fingers were short. The back of the hand had a sprinkling of black hair. As he lay on the bed in an attitude of almost exaggerated repose, it was easy to pick out the points of strength. The thick, well angled neck, heavy shoulders, long arms, a hollow barrel of a chest. The knit of a body in which muscles were not lazy with disuse, but tight and obedient.

He'd fight about fourteen stone, thought Millsom, who was a boxer himself. I shouldn't care to handle that one. I wonder if he's got a headpiece to match the body. Usually they haven't, these great big beautiful beasts. . . .

It was at that moment that he got a small shock.

He had been standing for almost ten minutes now, observing the man on the bed, and during that time the man had hardly moved. He might have been asleep. Many prisoners, after a long day in the quarries or on the farm, would be asleep before the lights were turned out.

Before he moved away, as his last, automatic glance covered the cell, he noticed a mirror propped on the shelf. It was arranged so that the man on the bed could command the door behind him. And as he looked into it, he looked straight into a pair of very wide open eyes.

Observing from the startled look on Millsom's face that his little device had been discovered, the man rolled over so that his back was to the room. As he turned his head, Millsom saw the upper lip lift. It was no more than a flash of white teeth, but he knew that the man on the bed was laughing at him.

That evening Millsom made a suggestion to the chief prison officer that surprised that official.

"Put Bird on list X?" said the chief officer. "Now, why should we do that? He's given no trouble."

"Not yet," admitted Millsom.

"What's on your mind?"

"I've got a feeling he's dangerous, sir."

"Anything concrete?"

"No, sir. Just a feeling."

The chief officer said no more, because he had worked with Millsom for quite a long time. Instead, he went to the cabinet and pulled out a folder.

"Burglary," he said. "Burglary and housebreaking. Nothing about violence."

"That's right," agreed Millsom. "The one he was booked for he didn't get violent. He didn't

ONE OF OUR SUBMARINES

Stirring real-life adventures of a wartime submarine ace

NEXT WEEK JOHN BULL presents the thrilling first record of Britain's submarines at war—told by an ace commander.

It is called *One Of Our Submarines*, by Commander Edward Young, D.S.O., D.S.C., R.N.V.(S.)R., and it will be serialized *exclusively in* JOHN BULL *in advance of book publication*.

In 1940, Edward Young, whose only sea experience was weekend yachting, became the first "amateur" to enter the submarine service—the most exclusive and most dangerous branch of the Royal Navy. From then on he embarked on some of the most exciting adventures of the war.

Edward Young (centre) on North Sea patrol

Admiral Sir George Creasy

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have a chance. There were a lot of others, though. They had his trademark. We shall never know for certain, because he wasn't caught and he wasn't charged with 'em."

"Any record of force in those?"

"When he had to, sir. Just as much as was necessary." Millsom searched his memory. "There was a country house break in Sunningdale. A servant found him in a bedroom and he pitched the poor chap through a first-storey window and broke his legs. The man couldn't identify him, but it was almost certainly Bird. He knocked out the private detective who was guarding the Bland-Astley wedding presents and put him in the refrigerator to cool off. And then—there was the time he was caught."

"Yes," said the chief officer. He looked down at the card. "Colonel Astley. The Croft, Missenden. Burglary. Did not resist arrest."

"That's right," said Millsom. "Matter of fact, I know the man who pulled him in. It's rather an odd story altogether. From what I gathered, Bird got into the colonel's house at about three o'clock one Sunday morning. There was a crop of weekend guests. He went round the bedrooms and got the jewellery and notecases. Then he thought he'd finish off by giving the colonel's study a going-over. He found the household cashbox with quite a bit of money in it and he was no doubt just about ready to call it a day when he spotted a letter."

"Letter?" said the chief officer. A burglar who stopped to read a letter was indeed something new in his experience.

MILLSOM smiled. "Yes, sir. It was a letter the colonel had been writing that afternoon. It was to his insurance company. It pointed out that he'd made no claim on his comprehensive insurance policy since he took it out. Wasn't it about time, the letter said, that he collected a no-claim bonus——"

"Ha!" said the chief officer. "That's good. You're making it up. It's too good to be true."

"Yes," said Millsom. "Bird thought it was funny, too. He thought it was so damned funny he sat down to add a postscript."

"He what?"

"I suppose he thought it was safe enough. He had just got as far as 'Don't count your chickens' when the door opened, the light went on, and there was the colonel. He simply kept a gun pointed at Bird and rang the bell for the butler, who fetched the police."

"I see," said the chief officer. "Just a great big joker. All right. Mark him for special observation. I don't think we can really justify knocking him off all outside work. Of course, if he does give any trouble. . . ."

IT was three weeks after Millsom's report to the chief officer that a party was at work on the North Farm. There were six prisoners and they were engaged in cutting out stone from a trench. Two men were using pickaxes, two were shovelling and two were loading barrows and running the spoil to a tip. Millsom was in charge of the party.

All six men were, in their way, dangerous, so the usual safety precautions were in force. Millsom moved around the party but kept clear of it. He had a field telephone over his shoulder and the wire ran back in the direction of a central control point half a mile away. His duty was to report to central control every fifteen minutes. A little way away, above the working party, a second officer stood, armed with a rifle.

The weather was perfect: a beautiful autumn day, with no suspicion of fog—that delusive friend to escaping convicts. Millsom was watching Bird. He was working some yards ahead of the other pick-man and was working faster—so much faster that he had almost reached the end of the trench where Millsom stood.

Twelve fifteen. Millsom unhooked the receiver and twirled the handle.

"Number Four Party here. All correct."

"All correct," repeated a voice at the other end.

He replaced the receiver and looked up just in time to see what happened, but too late to do anything about it. The pickaxe in Bird's hands went back a little farther than usual, then came singing forward. Heavy end first, it struck Millsom on the side of the face and as he went down Bird jumped.

The second officer heard the thud and looked up. He hesitated. It was difficult to see what was happening. The other five convicts stood stupidly, unmoving. Bird was underneath Millsom, and busy at something. Millsom was an inert bundle.

In fact, Bird was doing two things. He was hoisting Millsom's body on to his shoulder, so that the warder hung down between him and the man with the rifle, and he was destroying the field telephone.

The warder ran to his left, to try for a clear shot. Bird rotated slowly, so that Millsom still protected him. His strong fingers were methodically picking the telephone to pieces.

When he had finished he threw Millsom off and jumped for the high wall surrounding the farm. The officer hesitated again, and then made a very bad mistake. All he had to do was to fire his rifle into the air. Instead, he ran after Bird.

When he reached the corner of the wall, Bird was disappearing round the next corner. He appeared to be limping. The officer put on a spurt. He reckoned that when he got to the next corner he should be able to get a shot in. This was his second mistake. As he came round the corner Bird was just behind it, waiting for him.

Before he could so much as lift his rifle a pair of hands had him by the throat. He realized that he had been a fool. It was his last conscious thought for a long time.

Bird ran slowly across country. As he ran, his mind was busy. Everything so far had gone well. Now he had to place himself, to a certain extent, in the hands of Providence. Not too far, for Bird was not a great believer in Providence. He preferred to foresee contingencies and work out his own answers. At this point, however, a calculated risk had to be taken.

Time was the factor. If the second officer had fired his rifle, he would have been forced to make straight for the road. As it was, he had—how long? Fifteen minutes before control discovered that the telephone was out of order. Five minutes to put the authorities wise. Ten minutes before they could get their inner line of posts manned. A little longer before the outer ring was in action. Bird knew almost as much about Plan E as the staff themselves. It had cost real money to find out, but it looked like being a sensible investment.

He crossed the Tavistock road, after a quick look. Ran up behind Long Plantation, splashed through a shallow stream, and loped along the north of a second plantation, keeping it between himself and the pursuit. Another stream, a down slope of fields, and the Plymouth-Exeter road was in view. Bird reckoned that he had been going for not more than twenty minutes.

CAPTAIN BLAMEY was a traveller in cement. He had just finished a successful day's work in Plymouth and was on his way to Exeter, where he intended to stop for the night. He had passed the Torquay fork when he saw what appeared to be a barricade across the road, with a figure beside it, in cloak and cap, signalling to him to halt. He was not surprised. He knew the Plymouth-Exeter road and had been stopped before.

The surprises began when he saw that the barricade, instead of the usual affair of trestles and poles, was a farm gate, which had apparently been lifted from its hinges and placed across the road; also that the man who had stopped him, in spite of cloak and uniform cap, did not really much resemble a prison officer.

Captain Blamey made a belated effort to restart his car, and found himself being pulled from the driving seat.

Bird followed him round.

"Get in the other side and keep quiet," he said.

"But——"

"Listen," said Bird, and his level voice and

Continued on page 28

Mrs. Curley fights her own germ war

by ELKAN ALLAN

"It's lucky someone looks for such things," she says. And the figures show that unclean food affects nine people out of ten

DINING IN A PUBLIC HOUSE in the north of England, Mrs. Winifred Curley, a five-foot London housewife, and a fastidious cook herself, noticed that her soup plate had a sticky thumb mark on the side. She asked for a clean plate. When the meat course came, she discovered that her fork still had traces of food between the prongs. Her husband, Martin, tried to restrain her from "kicking up a fuss," but Mrs. Curley insisted on a clean fork. The sweet plate was not clean, and there was a fly on the cheese. She asked to see the manager, but the waitress came back with a "Sorry, he's busy."

The climax came when her coffee was served in a cup which was chipped, had dried coffee inside the rim, and was decorated with lipstick. "I'm taking this cup home with me," she announced. This time the manager was not too busy to come over, apologizing and protesting. But Mrs. Curley was stowing the cup away in her handbag. "I'll call a policeman and charge you with theft," threatened the manager.

"Don't worry, I'll send it back to you—after the Ministry of Food has seen it!" And with her husband, rather embarrassed but loyally backing her up, she swept out of the pub to post the offending cup to the Ministry.

By a coincidence, the food traders of Wembley, Middlesex, where she lives, were meeting a few days later to form a Clean Food Association. This was the result of a Ministry of Food circular asking for co-operation in a campaign against unhygienic handling of food. Martin Curley went along in his capacity as local councillor and, when he went home and told his wife they were stuck for a secretary, she offered to do the job.

She never heard what happened to the cup she sent to the Ministry, but when she went to the pub again a reformation had taken place, and she could find nothing to complain about.

That was three years ago, and since then Mrs. Curley has voluntarily given all her spare time to encouraging cleanliness in her district. One hundred and eleven food shops, cafés and food processors in Wembley now display a yellow, green and red sign with the slogan: "Health Through Cleanliness." This shows that they have passed an inspection far more stringent than is required in the by-laws. They promise to obey a code which includes such often-forgotten rules as: "Hands and fingers shall be scrubbed clean before commencing work," and "No smoking during the preparation, handling and distribution of unprotected foodstuffs."

"If any of our members break the rules, they are expelled. And losing a Clean Food badge means a heavy loss of business," says Mrs. Curley.

Mrs. Curley visits a "Clean Food" shop. Members who break the rules are expelled

Humans Are The Danger

Just how many people are affected each year by harmful bacteria in food is not known, though a doctor of the Central Council for Health Education says: "Something like ninety-five per cent of the population are probably affected in some degree. More than 5,000 deaths are caused each year by infection conveyed by food or drink."

Flies and mice carry some germs, but by far the most dangerous carriers are human beings. They can easily spread one of the two chief causes of food poisoning, the germs called *salmonellae*.

"Sal" are carried in the intestines, and if hands are not kept scrupulously clean, the germs are easily passed on to food, where they multiply. Eggs which are not quite fresh can be dangerous. One housewife ate a duck egg which she forgot to boil for the necessary eight minutes. Next morning, she made some potted-meat sandwiches and gave them to her children, who ate them for lunch and were unharmed, but by eight o'clock in the evening the germs, which had been transferred from her hands to the potted meat, had multiplied sufficiently to prostrate all the guests—and herself—at a party where she served the rest of the sandwiches.

The other main food poisoning germs, *staphylococci*, are not so lethal but are more numerous. At least forty per cent of the population carry some of these germs in their noses, and a sneeze or cough on food can release enough to start a rapidly growing colony. They are also found in boils, pimples and festering cuts, and a small scratch on the finger can infect all the food it touches. Unlike "sals," which are destroyed by adequate cooking, "staphs" can survive even ten minutes' boiling.

Menace Of Warmed-up Food

Ready-prepared meat products accounted for forty-eight per cent of the outbreaks in a recent year, and doctors urge housewives to use them as soon as possible after buying them. Next biggest menace is cooked food left standing overnight and served warmed up next day. Freshly cooked meat, fresh fruit, vegetables and bread are usually safe. The most dangerous breeding grounds are dishes which are warm and mushy.

The present intensive clean food campaign was touched off by the Aberystwyth typhoid epidemic of 1946. Ice cream was suspected of causing that outbreak, but, according to the Food Hygiene Advisory Officer of the Ministry of Food, "the ice cream industry has really put its house in order since then."

A ginger-haired Welshman named Morley Parry, the Advisory Officer co-ordinates the work of the hundred-odd Clean Food guilds and

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Eric Portman, the debonair tough

by WILFRED GREATOREX

Polished and elegant, he has made his name in rôles other actors call dangerous. Now he's first choice as the intelligent he-man

IN THE ANGRY HEAT of an Italian summer, a British film unit was trying, with worsening results, to get a sequence right. The scene was a straightforward one in which Eric Portman, as the colonial governor in *His Excellency*, was greeting a group of his island's people. But, in a shade temperature of 103, everybody was on edge, including Portman, who had to contend with the artificial lighting as well as the heat.

Finally, as the director, Robert Hamer, ordered yet another re-take, the heavily built star glared at him through thick eyebrows, stamped his half-smoked cigarette into the dust and snapped: "This is senseless! It's torture! And you lot are enjoying it!" An assistant laughed. Portman turned on him, too, and berated him sharply for a full minute.

Shortly afterwards, the production went ahead and the incident seemed to be forgotten. Two months later, however, while rehearsing a play in London, Portman was summoned to Ealing Studios to discuss a new rôle with Sir Michael Balcon. On his way to the chief's office, he slipped his guide and sought out the obscure technician to apologize for what he called "my fantastic rudeness in Palermo."

He Never Plays Safe

Portman's temper, sharp tongue and generous nature are by-words in the studios. "Without them," says one noted director, "it is doubtful if even his exceptional acting ability would have been enough to put him where he is today." At forty-nine, Portman has a world-wide reputation as an intelligent he-man; he is sought after by Hollywood and British film directors alike, as well as by theatrical producers, to play aggressive rôles that require mental rather than muscular toughness; and he has behind him a string of eleven screen successes in as many years, mainly in parts which his fellow-actors describe as dangerous or unsympathetic.

"I've always sensed an element of danger and mystery in my career," he says. "I don't intend to start playing safe now." There was an instance of this in 1940. Portman was telephoned by a pushful—but, as then, comparatively unknown—film-maker named Michael Powell, who asked blandly, "Can you come to Canada the day after tomorrow?" A party was setting out, he explained, to make what was frankly intended to be a propaganda picture to show Americans the Nazi menace to the U.S.A.

It was to be about a U-Boat crew, shot up and bombed in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, who escaped overland. "The whole thing," added Powell with, as it proved, masterly understatement (there was not even a script outline at this stage), "isn't completely under control. But you'll be one of the crew—the sixth German."

Bargain With The Mate

Two days later, Portman joined thirty-nine other actors and technicians at Liverpool and sailed on what has since been called "the wildest civilian escapade of the war." At Churchill, Manitoba, the unit joined a ship which had neither doctor nor wireless. It had in tow, for the long voyage among the icebergs, a full-sized model submarine which, as Portman puts it, could have led to awkward misunderstandings." On board, the film men were told that the centre hold was to be their quarters—a prospect that so appalled Portman that he refused "to be treated like a cargo of chilled beef" and struck a bargain with the mate which got him a cabin bunk of his own.

"Even during the roughest and most risky moments," recalls Powell, "Eric was always perfectly turned out, with polished shoes, well-brushed suit and neatly knotted tie. But when he was acting he didn't mind any dangers—and there were plenty. As the film grew (backwards, for Powell began "shooting" the only part

Eric Portman with Wanda Hendrix in his new film, *South of Algiers*. He does not mind playing unsympathetic parts. "People aren't interested in a man who is wholly virtuous," he says

of the story that was then clear in his mind, the end) so did Portman's enthusiasm. And when *49th Parallel* was released, he found that, at Raymond Massey's request, he had been given equal billing with Massey, Leslie Howard, Laurence Olivier and Anton Walbrook, all established stars.

The vague "sixth German" had developed into the main character, an unforgettable, arrogantly rugged, defiant U-Boat officer, the last man to be captured. "Portman," said a famous member of the cast, "made the part—and the part, dangerous though it was, made him." Immediately after *49th Parallel*, Portman caused consternation among his friends by playing another Nazi, the title part in *Squadron Leader X*: not long afterwards he was a Fascist Englishman in the stage version of *Zero Hour*. A whispering campaign grew.

One night, in his dressing-room, there were so many comments about it that the actor thumped a fist in his hand and cried: "The public aren't interested in a man who is wholly virtuous. And you"—he gazed round the room—"are no different." After that, he played a sardonic, unhappily married seaman, a dipsomaniac major, an inhibited magistrate, and a murderer, but returned to political rôles in *His Excellency* and the recent Peter Ustinov play, *The Moment Of Truth*. "Portman," said one critic, "should be more careful about the characters he lets himself in for."

Talked Into The Part

In fact, he is over-cautious in this matter. Early in 1947, Terence Rattigan sent him a new play with a note saying there was just the part for him in it. Portman read it through the same night, but was unimpressed. The following morning he delivered it personally to Rattigan's flat, admitting reluctantly that he did not like it. "Terry didn't bluster," he relates. "He just sat and argued very persuasively for an hour."

By the time he left, Eric Portman had agreed to be the schoolmaster in *The Browning Version*, which ran with conspicuous success for a year and became, with Michael Redgrave as the schoolmaster, a hit film. He had a similar experience with *His Excellency*, which he twice rejected before being talked into it. After a provincial run, it opened at the Prince's Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, in a heatwave. The theatre was almost empty. Takings amounted to £34. "It was so hot," recalls one member of the cast, "that we were all lifeless. Then Eric came on and went into it hell for leather. He was dripping with sweat. For sheer bravura I've never seen anything like it." Soon, despite the heatwave, the show was netting £4,000 weekly—"mainly," said one actor, "because of Eric's brooding stubbornness. He just won't be beaten."

He Knows Every Ruse

Portman is aware of this characteristic. A few weeks ago, Sir Michael Balcon offered him a big part in a new film to be made at Ealing. It was a good "sympathetic" rôle, but the actor turned it down. "It wasn't me," he explains. "It was the sort of kindly, well-meaning man who gets scored-off by other people. If there's any scoring-off, I like to do it myself." The truth of this was seen during the shooting of one recent film in which Portman and another actor were to do a "two-shot" showing them in profile.

"As the scene began," says a studio executive who was present, "the other man turned slightly into camera—an old trick that would have shown him to better advantage than Eric." Portman spotted the dodge and discreetly positioned himself so that he appeared, almost full-face, looking over the other's shoulder. Says Hamer: "He knows every ruse. He hates the pandemonium and seeming chaos of filming, but there's little anybody can teach him about it."

Born in Halifax, Yorkshire, on July 3, 1903, Eric Portman was the son of a wool merchant and used to serve behind the counter of his father's outfitting shop. Once, dreaming of stage successes, he was declaiming Shakespeare when a man entered, saw him, and left hurriedly. "There were also times," recalls a boyhood friend, "when Eric would contort his face in frustration when a customer came in."

Portman (right) rehearses *The Moment Of Truth* with Peter Ustinov. He turns characters inside out

For some years, Portman played in the Halifax Light Opera Company, then joined, "as a passenger," a Shakespearean company on tour. The first weekend he was free he caught a train to Halifax and paraded up and down the main street wearing "a vast overcoat" and feeling every inch the actor of his imagination.

Hollywood Let Him Go

From his earnings, Portman treated himself to a holiday in Paris, and it was there that he first became interested in films. "I went into a cinema and saw what a French director had made out of two people and a quayside. It was enthralling." He came back and harried the British studios until he was given a place in *Moonlight Sonata*. This won him a contract from Warner Brothers and he went to Hollywood for his big film chance. After six months he was still waiting.

One morning, he bustled into the studios and asked to be freed from his contract. "It was all against my upbringing and beliefs to get so much money for doing nothing," he says now. Hard-headedly, he insisted as a condition of his departure that the *Hollywood Reporter* should be told he was going because he wanted to go; a thoughtful precaution to which the studio agreed. "I'm sure they were as relieved to see me go as I was to leave," he says. The demand for Portman was not heavy until Powell's fantastic Canadian proposition came out of the blue.

It was the turning-point for Portman. When *49th Parallel* was released, he was sent on tour with the film and found it necessary to tell audiences, "If I made you dislike the Nazis more than you did, then I've done my job." Portman is often tackled about his political rôles. He usually points out that he has played Nazis, a trade-union leader, a collaborator and a Resistance patriot, besides officers of both sides in the last war. "From that lot," he says humorously, "you can think what you like."

In less realistic moments he expresses surprise that anyone should see recognizable political figures in his work. On the second night of *The Moment Of Truth*, which several critics had that day compared with the Pétain-Laval *affaire*, he burst into the theatre with a flourish, handed his velvet-collared overcoat to Harry McLarnon, his secretary, stared round at his assembled guests and snapped: "Pétain! All I saw in the part was an up-to-date King Lear!"

Portman's dressing-room coteries, which precede and follow most shows, are legendary. He enjoys them until it is time to make up. Then he gives a sign to McLarnon to clear the room. "From that moment," says McLarnon, "small-talk annoys him." He also hates being watched as he makes up. Not long ago, a thick-skinned caller, who stayed long after his welcome had run out, noted with triumphant helpfulness that Portman had put on one sock inside out.

The actor gazed coldly at the man's reflection in the mirror. "I prefer," he said icily, "to wear my socks that way!" He is especially testy in the moments before a highly emotional part in which a strong or pretentious man is faced with a breakdown, a characterization in which he revels.

Cut Off From The World

But he is least approachable when learning a new part. Then, he cuts himself off from the world at his cottage facing the sea at St. Veep, in Cornwall. This total preoccupation can be trying for playwrights, producers and directors who find that Portman has turned the character inside out before coming into rehearsal.

While in Cornwall he has a complete disregard for time. A few months ago, Peter Ustinov was awakened by the telephone at ten minutes past three one morning. It was a trunk call from Cornwall. "Eric was learning his part for *The Moment Of Truth*," Ustinov says. "He told me he had had an idea, but had changed his mind while I was getting to the phone and that now it didn't matter."

THE END

A girl for me

by ***NIGEL SLIGH***

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES WOOD

Even in daylight, the descent was dangerous; in darkness, it would be almost suicidal. Brenda didn't care. Before I could stop her, she was on the horse

I HAD COME up the Natal coast for a holiday, but it was the hot season and I wanted a breath of upland air, so I left the main road and began to make my way upwards, without purpose or clear direction as long as the ground rose, the air cooled and the coastal belt fell farther and farther behind me.

The car, an old prewar Chrysler, and I knew each other well. I'd picked it up in Algiers, of all unlikely places, when I left England to go to Kenya soon after I got out of the Army.

The car took me to Natal. I found a job on a sugar plantation, operating and keeping in working order the crushing plant. They paid me a decent wage, sixty-five pounds a month, and I shared a company's bungalow with another man.

The sugar country lies in a broad belt along the coast. Flat, stumpy hills rise unendingly; and up and down their flanks, farther than you can see, the cane is planted. Sugar growing never really attracted me, any more than tobacco or cotton growing. Somehow, it's almost like watching machinery when it's running well and there's nothing to do except check oil pressures, water thermostats and attend to routine maintenance.

I don't know why, but all my life I've wanted a small farm. Not an inefficient, pretty-pretty farm, but one small enough for me to know every acre, and I like to think that I could farm it well enough, by rotation of crops and by proper feeding of the soil.

Anyway, there it was, a pipe dream to which I could come back when I felt down in heart or bored or lonely. . . .

After two years, the firm gave me six weeks' holiday at a stretch. It was the quiet season, planting out, and for the first two or three hours, like a train on a fixed rail, I made off along the coast for Durban.

It was hot and sticky and all at once I thought how stupid I was being and I turned the old Chrysler uphill and we began to make our way towards the Drakensberg. It is a vast mountain massif. They say you get snow at certain altitudes.

There wouldn't be snow at this season of the year, I knew, but I didn't mind. I hadn't felt cool and full of energy for quite a time and I yearned suddenly for mountains, pure cold streams, and a view you could see for miles.

I stopped at a small hotel for the night, then went on next morning. I started early and already I could detect a chill in the air. I stopped the car and got out and sniffed. It was wonderful. The air seemed to blow down from the great gaunt peaks. It rushed across the fat, lush valleys of farms.

All at once I got my pipe dream, full force. This was a land where a man such as myself could settle and work and be happy. Then I told myself what a fool I was. The land in these parts had been settled and tilled for generations. It would cost the earth.

I got back into the car and drove towards the mountains. At the hotel I had got them to make me up sandwiches, and I'd bought a bottle of beer and about midday I pulled the car off the road into a parking bay, climbed over a stone wall and looked about for somewhere to eat my lunch.

The ground climbed fairly steeply, the sun was hot and I took off my coat and walked in my shirt sleeves. About half a mile ahead I saw a clump of trees on a bluff above the stream and I decided that I'd climb to them.

I cooled the beer in the stream, and drank it with my sandwiches, and then I lay down on my back and stared up at the interlocking branches, very content.

The wind had died away and it was so quiet that the only sound was the gurgle and rush of the stream, and then I heard a dead branch crackle as someone trod on it. I sat up and looked down.

Below me, on a small wiry horse, I saw a woman. She had on a white shirt and I noticed that her hair was fair, for the light glinted on it. She rode easily, a little slumped in the saddle, and I knew at once that she rode a lot. She couldn't have seen me, for the dappled shade of the trees was a perfect hide and the horse hadn't scented me. I stayed where I was.

When she was almost directly below my clump of trees, the girl reined in the horse and looked long and searchingly up at the mountains and suddenly whistled. It was a long, shrill whistle and the sound stayed in the air for some moments, and then the echo came back, down the valley from the rocks.

She waited another minute and then she turned the horse with a kick of her heel and I saw that she was coming to the trees. I didn't want to startle the horse if it came blundering over me and I stood up and came out of shelter. The girl caught sight of me, but she didn't stop the horse.

She called out: "Have you seen a mare? She's in foal and she must have come this way."

"No, I haven't."

"Have you been here long?"

"About half an hour."

ALL the time we spoke, she was coming closer to me. I could see now that she was quite young, about twenty, I guessed. Her hair was cut short and bleached into bands of lighter colour by the sun. Her skin was sunburnt, with freckles on the bridge of the nose, and although it was difficult to tell in the strong light, her eyes looked grey. She was not what you would call a beautiful woman, but she was healthy and natural and I liked her on sight.

She threw one leg across the saddle and slid to the ground and drew the reins over the horse's head. Standing beside me, she came to my shoulder and was slightly built. The tight khaki-drill trousers made her legs look long and the shirt didn't bulge above the waist, but I saw the swell of breasts under the shirt and the skin at her throat was brown against it.

There were the remains of my lunch and I asked her if she'd like anything to eat.

"I've got something with me," she said, and took out a package from a saddle-bag.

She put it down on the ground beside mine and walked to the stream. She knelt down and put her face in the water and drank. When she came back the front of her hair was wet and drips sparkled on her nose and chin. She sat down, cross-legged, and untied her parcel.

We chatted while she ate.

"She was a cross-bred pony, but quite young," she said. "This was her first foal. It means a lot to me."

"You're very fond of horses?" I asked.

"Love them. Since my mother died two years ago and left me the farm," she answered. "I've turned it into a sort of riding school. For the people who come here on holiday," she added.

She stared up at the mountains, worrying about the mare.

"How big is the farm?" I asked.

"About eighteen hundred acres. Too big for me. It's never been properly run since my father died."

SHE glanced at me and asked if I was on holiday. I told her I was. Then, I don't know how it was, I began to tell her about the sugar mill and perhaps also I hinted at my pipe dream. We sat and talked and she smoked two of my cigarettes and then she put down one of her hands and pressed herself to her feet and stood dusting the seat of her trousers like a child.

"I'll come and help you look," I said.

"She's gone up to the mountains," the girl said. And then she suddenly added: "My name's Brenda Yates. What's yours?"

I told her.

She caught the horse. She and I walked upwards, leading the pony. It was hotter now and, after the shade of the trees, the sun was fiercely hot on our backs. I saw beads of perspiration on her upper lip and once she stopped and pushed back a lock of hair from her forehead. Her shoes were white with dust.

We went up and up. Every now and then Brenda whistled and the echoes came chasing down the flanks of the mountains like giant steam-whistles.

It must have been almost four o'clock when Brenda's led horse neighed, and after a pause we thought that we heard an answering call.

We stopped and tried to fix the spot. The rock ran up almost perpendicularly opposite us and there was a ledge above it and I suppose, because of the shade of the overhanging rock or because there was some mountain spring, the

"You can't do it," I said. She didn't answer then, but came and put her face close to mine

grass on the ledge was vividly green. It was this band of colour that made us notice the shelf. Brenda shaded her eyes and stared intently at it.

"I think she's up there," she said at length. "But how has she got up?"

We went closer. The rock was like a wall, perhaps thirty feet high. There seemed no possible approach and I wondered if the mare had worked her way down to it from higher ground. We could see her quite clearly now. She was lying down and beside her was the foal.

We worked our way along the foot of the rock wall and presently saw a sort of rough step-ladder, worn out of the rock by water.

"There's a rope in my car," I said. "We'll never get them down without it. But it'll take me the best part of three hours to get to the car and back. What time is it dark here?"

"About half past eight."

"It'll give us an hour of daylight."

"Why should you do this?" she asked suddenly.

I said nothing, but turned and began to run to the car. My shoes were highly polished by the dry grass and I slipped and slithered, but I made good time. I was wet through with sweat by the time I reached the Chrysler and my heart was coming out of my mouth. I got the rope, a good fifty feet of Manila hemp, out of the boot and I took also my coat, a rug and a blanket. There was a flask of brandy in a pocket of the car and I remembered to carry this as well. I glanced at the clock on the dashboard when I left, and it was after five.

The return journey, uphill and laden with the rope, was a slow progress. My legs ached. I was panting and almost blinded with sweat. But, funnily enough, I didn't care. I hadn't felt so happy since I don't know when. I began to think of Brenda again. I could see perfectly clearly the freckles on her nose, the large, grey eyes and the streaks in her hair.

My first impression had been that she was not beautiful, but as I began to think of her again I said to myself that I must have been mad. She was divinely beautiful and I think that then, panting, swearing, grunting as I forced my tired body up the slope of the mountain, I fell in love with her.

It took me over an hour. When I came near, I saw that Brenda had got on to the shelf, beside the mare and she had the foal's head on her knees.

She waved and waved and I waved back. She came to the head of the rock chimney. "You were quick," she said.

It wasn't much to say, but I felt so proud that I thought my heaving chest would burst. Before I began to climb up the chimney I sat down and put my head between my knees and counted a hundred. I laid down my coat, the blanket and rug and made sure that the brandy flask was in my coat pocket. Then I climbed up the chimney, the rope coiled round my shoulders.

It was almost seven.

The ledge was surprisingly broad when one got up on to it. It was possibly about 200 yards in length. The grass was short, like upland mountain grass, sweet and green. The mare, apart from the difficulty of getting up or down from the shelf, could not have chosen a more comfortable and secluded bed. The angle of the rocks above would cut off the heat of the sun, the rocky wall gave protection from the wind and there was a tiny spring of fresh water bubbling out of the mountain.

THE mare was standing up when we got to her. She was probably about fourteen and a half hands. The rope was strong enough to bear her weight, but I couldn't see how ever we could check it if we lowered her over the ledge unless we could fix a brake somehow. There was nothing on the ledge. Not a single tree to give us leverage. I glanced up at the wall above us. It was smooth, black rock. There was no entry to the ledge except the one single rock chimney. In some way, the mare must have made her way up. In foal as she was, clumsy, she had yet been impelled by some primitive urge for seclusion and had driven herself up.

We found a place where the rock below the ledge shelved slightly inwards and where it would be possible to lower the foal, in a rope cradle, without its body striking too violently against the wall.

We devised a rough form of cradle, lifted the foal to the edge, and while Brenda held it clear of the rock wall I dug my heels into the grass and lay back against the weight. I thought for an instant that I was going to be dragged over the wall, but Brenda clung to the rope, and the moment that she saw that the foal was clear threw her full weight on to the rope. We paid out the rope slowly, carefully, and each hand-hold was agony.

After an eternity, the weight suddenly ceased, and Brenda ran to the edge.

"He's down. He's on his feet. If you hold on, I'll go down and untie him and then. . . ."

She didn't say anything more. It was pretty obvious that the two of us could never lower the mare as we had lowered the foal.

I lay on my chest on the short, sweet grass and rested. It was almost dark now, and after a while I began to coil up the rope. I went to the head of the chimney and waited for Brenda.

"What shall we do?" I asked when she came up. "Can we go down with the foal and get help and come back for the mare?"

"She'll try and follow if we do," Brenda

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At Eyemouth, Scotland, Ian Fraser slips into his frogman outfit before he dives in to supervise repairs on the harbour

Ian Fraser listens to a diver describing progress under the water. The firm uses standard-dress divers as well as frogmen

Six hours a day under the waves

by DON EVERITT

Working in seas, ponds and sewers, Fraser's frogmen have deepened harbours, rescued gold watches, and found corpses

AT THE END of the last war, Ian Edward Fraser, a dark, compactly built naval lieutenant who had won the V.C. in a midget-submarine action at Singapore, found himself without the vaguest notion of what he was going to do in civilian life. To give himself time to think, he decided to stay on in the Navy for a short term. Ironically, not long after he had signed on, a chance conversation in a wardroom at Portsmouth provided the answer to his problem.

He heard that a group of naval frogmen had backed out of a show which had been planned at the Belle Vue entertainment park in Manchester. With his brother, Brian, and two midget-submarine companions, Fraser quickly visualized big commercial possibilities. He also realized that the Belle Vue show would give the venture a good start. The sailors offered to take it over. Belle Vue accepted them and, after Fraser had spent several weeks frantically seeking his release from the Navy, they opened the show at the beginning of the 1947 season.

Thus began the first—and probably still the only—commercial frogmen enterprise in the world. But in spite of their high hopes Universal Divers did not immediately have heady success. The Belle Vue show went over quite well, but the civil engineering contracts which they had hoped for did not roll in. In fact, the total result was two jobs. And the very first of these, while illustrating the versatility of the frogman, was not at all attractive. It consisted of cleaning out settlement tanks which had become choked at a Manchester sewage disposal unit.

When the Belle Vue season ended, Universal Divers found themselves out of work, out of confidence and almost out of money. Most of the £400 capital which the quartet had equally subscribed had long since disappeared on the equipment they needed for themselves and the six frogmen they were employing. They began to think seriously of calling the whole thing off as just another ex-Servicemen's mushroom business. Then they had a piece of luck.

One day Ian Fraser spoke to a possible future customer, the marine surveyor of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board. He promised to keep Universal Divers in mind. A few days later a cargo ship named *Matrona* capsized while being refitted in Bidston Dock, Birkenhead. The surveyor kept his promise, and Fraser and his colleagues got three months' work, helping with the salvage operations.

The job proved the frogmen's worth. They had to remove the cargo of coal and ballast; strip the superstructure and seal the ports with metal blanks. On the crazily tilted decks, in the cabins, holds and gangways and under the overhanging beam of the ship, they were able to work with much greater speed and efficiency than the ordinary diver in heavier gear.

From then on, Universal Divers have never looked back. Jobs have always been waiting for them. They have worked under everything from a barge to a brewery. Their frog feet have propelled them through the sea, and through the water in a gasholder. Their shortest job occupied less than a minute—locating a girl's body in a clay pit after police had been dragging for a week. Their longest took two years—helping to build an oil and lay-by berth at Teesport.

They have repaired bridges, piers, jetties, locks, docks, river and harbour walls, sewers, culverts. They have surveyed, built and demolished. They have deepened harbours. An old man asked them to search for a gold watch dropped from a bridge. A woman employed them to look in an icebound pond for her handbag, which contained the takings from her shop. After heavy floods, they have answered urgent calls to see whether the scouring caused by fast currents has undermined river embankments.

Found Leak In Gasholder

With their easy manoeuvrability, the frogmen are superior to ordinary divers on inspection work. Universal Divers specialize in it. They see that new mains across rivers and sewer outfalls on the coast are laid in the right places. They survey damage and deterioration. In surveying a stone jetty, for example, they plot the depth, area, exact shape and length of every crack and hole. To add to the intricacy, the water is usually darkened by sediment and the work has to be done largely by touch.

Not only can the frogman do certain jobs more efficiently than the ordinary diver, but he can do others which have never been considered as diving operations before. "To repair a cooling

water intake at an industrial plant, for example, often means putting it out of operation and pumping it dry," says Fraser. "We've been able to do it much more quickly and without stopping the works. The beauty of the frogman apparatus is that it doesn't need pumps; you can pack it in a suitcase, you can get quickly into it and on the job, and it's not cumbersome like the standard dress. To find a leak in a gasholder we got down an eighteen-inch gap between the holder and the water tank."

Swam Down Three-foot Pipe

Working under water in a confined space has its drawbacks. Diving is never pleasant, but to work in a stream running for a quarter of a mile underground through a three-foot pipe can be both extremely uncomfortable and tricky. When Ian Fraser explored a 900-yard culvert to find out what was causing it to flood, he found seven of its nine feet of height choked with tar.

The two-piece suits that Universal Divers wear today are the type which was developed during the war. "Few people realize just how difficult it was to design and make them," says Ian Fraser. "The suit's prime object was to keep you warm, yet it had to be light and close-fitting for swimming. All the existing lightweight diving suits proved unsuitable. Being inelastic, they hung loosely about you, and in the water the folds set up a resistance to swimming and trapped pockets of air which upset your buoyancy."

Eventually, a satisfactory design was made of rubber spread on stockinet (later models have nylon), with latex rubber cuffs, and an elastic, almost untearable neck. At the waist the suit is sealed by rolling together two overlapping flaps, at the neck by clamping on a lightweight, tight-fitting latex hood.

"The fins give amazing control under water, and almost superhuman power and endurance," says Fraser, "but the name frogman is really a misnomer. It would have been more correct to have called us fishmen. The frog swims with a breast-stroke kick, expanding and contracting the webs of his feet. The frogman uses the up-and-down crawl kick, imitating a fish's tail."

Frogman apparatus calls for a technique completely different from normal diving. Instead of standing in the water, the frogman is horizontal. He often dives head first; he swims only with his legs. All this means he must have neutral buoyancy. If he carries any lead weights they must not be on the neck, shoulders or feet, but right on the waistline. Like a submarine, he will slowly sink if he is trimmed too heavily and float to the surface if he is too light.

Air Lasts Ninety Minutes

The breathing apparatus is specially designed so that it does not disturb his delicate balance, and gives a constant supply of oxygen in every position he takes up. Under normal conditions, the air supply lasts for an hour and a half. "In an eight-hour day," says Fraser, "we reckon to spend six on the job."

Today, of the original four directors in Universal Divers, only the youthful Fraser brothers—Ian is thirty-one, Brian twenty-nine—are left. Four of the six frogmen whom they originally employed have left, too. For some the novelty wore off; others did not like spending so much time away from home. They have been replaced by experienced standard-dress divers. "Normal diving has become as important to us as frogman work, and we've found it easier to teach a diver to wear frogman apparatus than to teach a frogman to do a diver's job."

Ian Fraser says that the qualities necessary in a frogman are fitness, a good deal of intelligence and determination and, above all, a lack of temperament. Attributes which he gains with experience are a good sense of direction and touch. "Most jobs are done in near or total darkness. On the coast you can generally see for twelve yards or more when you're thirty feet down, but inland you rarely see anything below a few feet. When you're cutting steel it often takes you all your time to see the 1,600-degree flame of the cutting torch. I often burn my finger ends guiding the flame on to the right spot."

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM KEMP

An admiring crowd watches as Brian Fraser leaps in at Cromer to repair the lifeboat slipway

To learn to use the swim fins under water takes about three weeks and is comparatively easy. The Frasers also teach the complete novice to recognize the symptoms of the frogman's main danger, carbon dioxide poisoning. "We put him in the tank unaware that he has no carbonic acid absorbent in his apparatus."

Carbon dioxide poisoning occurs most often when the frogman overworks and forgets the golden rule to breath slowly and deeply. Instead of forcing his exhalations into the absorbent, he re-breathes them. The result is that he gets sleepy or intoxicated. "The sleepiness is easily recognized and remedied," says Ian Fraser. "I've had it when I've been sawing wood underwater. Stop working, a few deep breaths and everything's all right again."

The intoxication, however, can be sudden and dangerous. Men have ripped off their masks under the influence of carbon dioxide. Fraser remembers a wartime frogman who punched one of his rescuers on the jaw, leaped back into the sea, and drowned. In the early wartime days of the apparatus, frogmen were particularly susceptible to carbon dioxide intoxication and what was known as shallow-water black-out. It was eventually found that the frogman's high oxygen consumption was responsible. In view of the occupational hazards, the Frazer brothers insist on their men using a rope—four tugs for "Danger, pull me up"—despite the fact that the frogman is self-contained. "We're not like Service frogmen; we always work in a limited area, so we might as well take every precaution."

The rope has saved the life of at least one member of the firm. The man in question collapsed from carbon dioxide poisoning while working inside the capsized *Matrona*. His attendant noticed a change in the feel of the rope, gave a tug and got no reply. "A rope is useless, of course, without an experienced man holding it, a man with a sixth sense who can tell what is going on at the other end, 200 feet or more away."

Whatever a frogman is doing, he always attracts a crowd. "Heaven knows why," says Ian Fraser, "because after he's jumped in the water, nobody can see a thing." There was one occasion, however, when this was not so. The frogman was going to survey a bridge. On his arrival, a throng quickly surrounded him, and newspaper photographers turned up while he was donning his gear. With appropriate ceremony, he leaped into the river—and landed in water only calf-deep. As he waded into the middle it got very little deeper, and he actually surveyed the centre pillar of the bridge with his behind sticking out of the water.

It was the one occasion when Universal Divers did not completely live up to their motto: *Sub Undis Laboramus*, "We Work Beneath The Waves." THE END

The Far Country

by NEVIL SHUTE

The operation had to be carried out at once—on the ground. Jennifer told herself: "I must not faint"

JENNIFER MORTON HAD TAKEN the biggest decision of her life. At twenty-four, her world was bounded by London, where she worked, and Leicester, where her parents lived. Now she had given up her job as a typist and her digs in the suburbs. Saying goodbye to her family and friends and the dull routine of her life, she was off to Australia—with £400.

The money was left to her by her grandmother. The old lady had died, miserably, of malnutrition —too proud to appeal for help. Ironically, just before she died, a cheque for £500 had come from her niece, Jane Dorman, in Australia. Jane had outraged the family by marrying and going off with an Aussie soldier after the first World War. Only Aunt Ethel—Jennifer's grandmother —had kept in touch with her. . .

Jennifer cabled the news of her death to Jane Dorman and asked what she should do with the money. The reply came in a few days. KEEP MONEY AND DO COME OUT HERE AND VISIT US PLENTY OF JOBS MELBOURNE.

Plenty of jobs . . . plenty of money, too. For the first time in their lives, the Dormans were rich. Wool was booming; their sheep farm was prosperous. Jack Dorman looked around him. Australia was filling up with eager D.P.s from Europe. Dorman hadn't made up his mind whether or not he approved of these "New Australians"—even of Carl Zlinter, a man he went fishing with.

Zlinter had been a surgeon in his native Czechoslovakia. Now he had to work for two years in a lumber camp before he could begin studying to qualify for an Australian medical degree. He took his lot philosophically. In Australia there was freedom, security, the promise of a better life. He was prepared to work and wait for that.

Half a world away, Jennifer Morton was swayed to her decision by the same reasoning. The promise of a better life, a more exciting life. . . . At least she could sample it with the unexpected windfall.

The Dormans were there to meet her when the ship docked. There were quick introductions, the bustle of the customs, and then she walked ashore. Jennifer was free into Australia.

PART 3

Jennifer In Australia

SHE drove to the hotel with Jack and Jane Dorman, their daughter Angela following in the old Chevrolet with Tim Archer, the Dormans' hired man. In a blur of first impressions the width of the streets and the great number of motor cars impressed her most; whatever else Melbourne might be, it was a beautifully laid-out city, and obviously a very prosperous one.

The Dormans had engaged a room for her at the Windsor for a couple of nights; she found herself whisked up into it, and then they all had lunch together, except for Tim Archer, who started back for Merrijig in the old utility.

Jennifer decided that it was easier to submit until the hospitality of these kind strangers had exhausted its first impetus; she felt that it would be rude and ungenerous to battle against it now. Angela disappeared after lunch upon her own affairs, and Jane and Jack Dorman took Jennifer out to the new Ford utility. They all sat together in the wide seat and started out on a long drive up into the Dandenong mountains, clothed in trees finer and taller than any that Jennifer had seen in England

BY the time they got back to Melbourne she was dazed with new impressions. By common consent they spent the evening quietly in the hotel. Jennifer was tired, and at Leonora the Dormans were in the habit of getting up at six in the morning and going to bed soon after nine each night. So for a while after dinner Jennifer sat talking quietly with Jane Dorman in a corner of the lounge of the hotel, while Jack smoked a cigar and read the *Herald*.

The girl said presently: "I'd like to take a little time tomorrow looking for a room or a small flat to live in here. It's terribly nice of you to ask me up to Leonora, and I'd love to go back with you for a week, but after that I'll have to come back here and take a job. I thought I'd better see about that tomorrow."

Jane said: "I know just how you feel. We'll get you fixed up with somewhere nice to live before we go back home. I don't think you ought to be in too much of a hurry to start work, though. The temperature was over a hundred here the day before yesterday. It's the worst time of the year for anybody coming out from England, and you're bound to feel it more than we do. You'll be much more comfortable if you stay with us at Leonora for a month, and start work in the autumn. It's much cooler out there."

The girl said awkwardly: "I think I ought to start earning something sooner than that, even if it is a bit hot." The austerities of England were still strong in her; to relax and rest was somehow vaguely disgraceful. "I'm living on your money as it is," she said.

Zlinter saw Jennifer standing there. "Please," he sai

The older woman said evenly: "You're doing nothing of the sort, my dear. When we sent that money to Aunt Ethel we gave it to her. That was the end of it, so far as we were concerned."

The girl said: "I'm sorry—I oughtn't to have said that. But I would rather start earning my own living fairly soon. I don't want you to think I'm ungrateful, when you've been so very kind. But I've got to paddle my own canoe some time, and the sooner I start the better."

"I know," said Jane. "So long as you know that, we should love to have you for as long as you can stay with us. Have you ever lived in the country, at home?"

The girl laughed. "No," she said frankly. "I've always lived in towns—in Leicester, and then in London. I don't really know what living in the country's like. I suppose that's why I'm interested in it."

"It can be very dull in the country," Jane said. "Long periods of doing nothing but the daily work a woman has to do, cooking and

. "Come here." She obeyed. "Have you ever seen an operation?" She shook her head. "I am going to take off that man's foot. Are you afraid?"

washing and cleaning the house. No one but your husband and the men to talk to, and only the radio to listen to. But . . . I don't know. I wouldn't like to live anywhere else."

Jennifer thought about this for a minute. Then she asked: "How many sheep have you got?"

Jane looked up in surprise. "I don't quite know—about three thousand, I think. Jack, how many sheep are there on Leonora?"

He looked up from his paper. "Three thousand five hundred and sixty, unless someone's been along and pinched some of 'em."

"Then there's the beef cattle," Jane Dorman said. "About two hundred Herefords."

"Two hundred and six," said her husband, and returned to his paper.

"I suppose you sell a lot of them for meat," said Jennifer.

"Sell about six or seven hundred fat lambs every year," Jane replied, "and a good few ewes. But most of the money comes from the wool clip, of course."

"I wasn't thinking so much about the money," the girl replied. "It must be rather fun raising so much food."

Jane Dorman glanced at her curiously. Jennifer had certainly come to Australia with a novel outlook.

She asked: "How are things at home now, in regard to food? What's it really like, for ordinary people?"

Jennifer said: "It's quite all right—there's really heaps of food. Of course, it's not like it is here, or on the ship. But there's heaps to eat in England."

"Not meat, is there?"

"No. Meat *is* a bit scarce."

"When you say scarce, Jennie, what does that mean? One hears such different stories. One day you see a picture of a week's ration of meat in England about the size of a matchbox, and then someone like you comes along and says it's quite all right. Can you get a steak?"

"Oh no—not what *you'd* call a steak."

"What about restaurants?"

"At the luxury ones, maybe. I'd never tasted a grilled steak till I got on the ship. Even if you could get the steak, I don't think you'd cook it that way, because of wasting the fat."

Jane asked: "But what do you cook when you go out on a picnic?"

The question rather stumped the English girl. "I don't know," she said, and laughed. "Not that, anyway."

"You eat a lot of fish, don't you?"

Jennifer nodded. "A lot. Do you get much fish here?"

"Not much fresh fish. I don't think we've got the fishing fleets that you've got at home. We get a lot of kippers and things like that." She laughed. "It always makes me feel very near home when we have kippers for breakfast."

They talked sporadically for a while until Jennifer asked: "Have you been doing a lot of shopping since you came down here?"

"Oh, my dear. Do you know anything about pictures?"

Jennifer knew absolutely nothing about pictures, but she listened with interest to the results of the picture hunt to date. She went to bed early like the Dormans, thinking that

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM LITTLE

FROM MY FAMILY ALBUM

"As for me, I'm just folks," says the Kansan, who was ten when this picture was taken. "I come from the people, the ordinary people."

One of seven sons of a jack-of-many-trades, he had a hard childhood. The family was poor. He had to wear his mother's old button-top shoes to school; when he grew out of them, the next brother had to wear them. His mother made him get up at five o'clock every morning to light the fire.

All the brothers were fighters, and he once fought the boy who was reputed to be the toughest boxer in town for two hours, without either of them giving in. He was so beaten up that it was three days before he could go back to school.

When he was about thirteen he slipped and grazed his knee. Two days later his foot was black with blood poisoning. Within twenty-four hours the whole leg to the knee was swollen. The doctor drew a circle just above the blackness. "We'll have to take it off to

there. The longer we wait, the more we'll have to take off."

The boy gritted his teeth and called to one of his brothers. "You got to promise me you won't let 'em do it. You got to promise. I won't be a cripple. I'd rather die." His brother promised.

While he bit on a fork to keep from screaming, his brother kept guard for two days and nights while the blackness advanced up the thigh. The doctor muttered the word "murder," but it made no difference. At last came a miracle and the swelling retreated. Three weeks later he walked out of the room.

Both he and the brother who kept his promise wanted to go to college, so they struck a bargain. They would take it in turn to work a year to support the other at college. He spent the year 1909-10 as a second engineer and fireman at a creamery, working eighty-four hours a week—from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day.

Then he took the entrance examinations for both the Naval Academy at Annapolis and the Army school at West Point. He did better in the naval test, but it turned out he was too old.

In spite of the war and of his mother, a Jehovah Witness—"Those who live by the sword, shall perish by the sword"—he became a soldier.

Now a world-famous soldier, he is turning to a new career. For his name, see page 31.

these were simple and unaffected people whom she was beginning to like rather well.

She went shopping with them next day, feeling rather shabby as she walked with them on a round of the best shops. Jane wanted to buy a wrist-watch for Jack Dorman to commemorate their holiday, and they all went into a shop that Jennifer would never have dreamed of entering alone, and looked at watches; finally Jane bought a gold, self-winding wrist-watch for her husband for ninety-two guineas, and never turned a hair. Clothes did not appear to appeal to Jane very much—"I so seldom go anywhere, Jenny"—but shoes were another matter, and she bought thirty-eight pounds' worth in half an hour. Jack left them while this was going on, and they went on to Myers and bought a new refrigerator for £120 and a mass of miscellaneous kitchen gadgets and equipment for £53 18s. 6d. "We get down to Melbourne so seldom," Jane said happily.

Jennifer wandered after her in a daze; she had never spent a morning like that before. Jack caught up with them as they were having morning coffee and said that he'd sometimes thought that Jane should have a car of her own and not use the station utilities, and he'd found a Morris Minor that had only done 1,000 miles and was a bargain at a hundred quid above list price, and would Jane like to come and look at it?

By tea-time they were all dead tired, and they had spent nearly fourteen hundred pounds.

"We don't always go on like this," said Jane. "In fact, I don't think we've ever done it before." Later that evening she showed Jennifer a gold and blue enamel dressing-table set that Jack had bought for her all by himself, and had presented to her rather sheepishly.

Jennifer felt that surely there must be something wrong in spending so much money; her upbringing in the austerities of England insisted that this must be so. The queer thing was, that here it all seemed natural and right.

They took things a little more easily next day, and bought nothing but an English grandfather clock for 180 guineas, because it was just like one that Jane remembered in her English home, thirty years before.

They took delivery of the little Morris before lunch and Jane drove it to Toorak to show it to Angela, and after lunch they all drove out in the two cars, Jane driving the Morris with Angela beside her and Jack Dorman following with Jennifer in the new Mercury utility to pick up the pieces if Jane hit anything.

They were back in the city in time for drinks before dinner, and then went out to a show.

Next morning Jane and Jennifer went out early in the little car to look for a boarding-house, and found one that they had had recommended in a suburb called St. Kilda, not far from the sea and about twenty minutes in the tram from the centre of the city. There was no room vacant for three weeks, which Jane Dorman considered to be a very good thing. Jennifer liked the look of the woman who kept it and bowed to the inevitable, paid a deposit, and engaged the room. Jane and Jennifer drove back to the city and had their hair set, rather expensively.

They went to the pictures that night and saw Gary Cooper; next day they left for Leonora. By a last-minute decision Angela came with them. At about eleven o'clock they were ready to start.

Jane Dorman was not a fast driver, and the Morris was new to her; it was evening when they came to Leonora after a slow drive through magnificent mountain and pastoral country.

They saw wallabies at one point, hopping across a paddock at a distance from the road, and at another place, a black-and-silver animal the size of a large cat, with a bushy tail like a silver fox fur, ran across the road in front of them; Jennifer learned that this was a possum.

The style of the small towns and villages through which they passed reminded her of movie pictures of the Middle West of the United States; the same wooden houses with wide verandas and tin roofs, the same wide streets, at one time cattle tracks.

In the evening they came to Leonora homestead on the slopes of the Buller range above the bridge and school and hotel that was Merrijig. "Well, this is it," said Jane. "Is it like what you thought it was going to be?"

Jennifer looked around her. All the buildings were severely practical, the walls of white-painted weatherboard, the roofs of corrugated iron painted with red oxide. There were numbers of great corrugated-iron water tanks, cylindrical in form, disposed to catch the rain that fell upon the roofs, and there was another such tank high up on a wooden stand from which the house was supplied.

The house itself had deep verandas on two sides and flywire doors, and screens on all the windows. Standing in the yard she had a wide view out over the basin of the Delatite, pastures and occasional woods, and behind that again the sun was setting beyond a wooded mountain. It was very quiet and secure and peaceful in the evening light.

"I think it's simply lovely," said the girl from London. "I don't think I've ever been in such a beautiful place."

They turned to the homestead and started on the business of getting themselves and the luggage indoors, and the refrigerator, and the grandfather clock, and then got down to preparing supper. Mario had killed a sheep and butchered it and there was cold roast mutton in the larder; salad and tinned peaches with cream and plum cake completed the impromptu meal, which they ate in the big kitchen that was the central room of the homestead.

Leonora homestead had several bedrooms, but with Tim and Mario both living in, Angela Dorman and Jennifer shared a room. Jennifer soon found that Angela was frankly curious about England; the barrage of questions began as soon as they went to bed.

"Have you ever seen Westminster Abbey?" Angela asked.

Jennifer was taken by surprise. "Why—yes."

"It's very beautiful, isn't it?"

The girl from London had to think a bit. "It's all right," she said at last. "I don't know that I ever noticed it particularly."

"It's where they have the Coronation, isn't it? Where the King and Queen get crowned?"

Jennifer wasn't quite sure if the Coronation took place there or at St. Paul's; neither of them meant a great deal in her life. "I think it is," she said, and laughed. "You know, it must sound awfully silly, but I'm not quite sure."

"Have you ever seen the King and Queen?" asked Angela.

"I saw them in the procession when Princess Elizabeth got married," she said. "I was standing in the Mall; they passed quite close."

"How marvellous! The Mall—that's the avenue between Buckingham Palace and the Admiralty Arch, isn't it?"

"That's right." It was incredible how much Angela knew about London.

"Did you see Princess Elizabeth, too?"

Jennifer nodded.

"And the Duke of Edinburgh?"

"Yes. I've seen them several times."

"Tell me—do they look like their pictures?"

"Yes, I think so—as much as anyone looks like their picture. They look very good sorts."

"I'm going to London next year, if the wool holds up," said Angela. "I want to get a job in one of the big hospitals. Have you ever seen Winston Churchill?"

"I'm not sure," said Jennifer. "I've seen him on the pictures so many times, one gets muddled up." She searched for a palliative for her disgrace. "I've seen Bob Hope."

"Have you really? Have you seen any other film stars?"

"One or two. I saw Dennis Price once, at a dance."

"You *are* lucky. Have you seen Ingrid Bergman? I think she's beaut.".

It went on and on, long after they were both in bed and growing sleepy. To Angela the English girl was a visitor from another planet, a beautiful rose-coloured place where everything that happened was important to the world. "I should think you'll find it awfully dull in

Continued on page 22

Ted Ray and Sybil in their young married days. "When I proposed to Sybil, she just burst into tears"

"Sybil as she appeared in an early show"

My life of fiddling and fooling (5) by ***TED RAY***

Courting the girl from 'The Saucy Nineties'

Falling in love with Sybil was heartbreaking—she was so elusive. Then came the lucky meeting in London, when Ted took her boating on the Hyde Park lake

I WAS PLAYING the Birmingham Hippodrome one week in 1932, and was back at my digs having tea in front of the fire when I suddenly had a peculiar feeling which said: "There's a message waiting for me at the theatre."

By now, I was a fairly well-established act, and was becoming a familiar figure, with my lounge suit, snappy trilby and violin, at the leading music halls up and down the country. I called my act "Ted Ray—Fiddling and Fooling," and was earning a steady, if unspectacular, living. But I had not yet achieved my ambition of playing at the London Palladium: that is the one thing that sets the seal on a performer.

I put on my coat and went across to the theatre. Sure enough, there was a telegram for me from my agent, George Barclay. It said: YOU OPEN LONDON PALLADIUM MONDAY NEXT.

Arriving in London on the Sunday, I could not resist the same impulse which a few years before had made me stroll up to examine the boards outside the London Music Hall in Shoreditch. I sauntered down Argyll Street and stopped to gaze at the posters outside the Palladium. Although one almost had to use a microscope to find my name on the bill, there it was. I felt my chest swelling as I read the words, "Ted Ray: A Newcomer."

I found I had a very early spot on the bill, but, indeed, I had expected nothing better. The Palladium Girls, a little band of dancers who worked with regimental precision and polish, opened the show. Then came a pair of acrobats—and then, as "Number Three" went up in the frames, there entered—Ted Ray.

I walked on from the wings carrying my violin and my future in my hands. I should like to be able to report a repetition of what had happened in Shoreditch. But I found there was a world of difference between the two types of audience. The Palladium patrons were critical. The laughs did not come so easily as they had before, and I did not feel that I was really doing very well. I finished to quite nice applause, having raised a few laughs. Then I went up to my dressing-room and opened all the telegrams wishing me luck. I was full of misgiving, somehow. I hadn't done what I'd said I'd do. I hadn't "murdered" them. I felt I'd done all right, but that was all.

Presently, a knock came on the dressing-room door, and there stood a man I now know as Val Parnell, head of the Palladium. He said, "We've changed your spot in the programme." I thought they had put me second instead of third turn. But his next words gave me great comfort. "You did very well, and in the next show we're putting you on second after the interval." This was a very nice position on the programme, a coveted spot.

So I told myself that everything was all right, and went out to the second house and really caned them. I did enormously well. I got the bit between my teeth and really went to town. I played for about ten and a half minutes instead of six, which caused the stage manager to give me a bit of a telling off, because he was no respecter of persons and he had to keep to a time schedule. When I came out, I could see people pointing to my name on the bills and saying: "That's the feller—wonder where he's come from?"

I was immediately signed up for six return

"Dancer Eddie Ready at his wedding in 1934. One of my Palladium memories is of Eddie being mistaken for Ramon Novarro and mobbed by fans"

"The late Will Fyffe. When my first son was born I telegraphed the news to him. The amusing reply was typical of a great and truly human artist"

dates at the London Palladium. But I was not a very good business man and I signed up for practically the same money as I got for my first appearance there, which was a mistake. If I had known what I know now I would have hung back and not been so anxious to sign.

The Palladium has been a sort of second home to me ever since. I have had many excitements there, including my times with Danny Kaye and at Royal Command Performances, but one of the most extraordinary weeks was when I played on the same bill as Ramon Novarro, the film star. At the end of every show the stage door was besieged by moon-struck crowds who were quite happy to stand in the rain for hour after hour just to catch a glimpse of their idol.

Dress Suit Torn To Rags

On the bill was a clever dancing act, Hibberd, Bird and Ready. Eddie Ready bore a striking resemblance to Novarro. After he and his partners had done their first show at the Palladium on the Monday night, they had to dash over to Finsbury Park Empire to repeat their act there. No sooner had Eddie appeared at the stage door than a screaming mass of women descended on him, and he literally disappeared from view.

They had obviously mistaken him for Ramon Novarro, and he was pushed and pulled all over the street. The crowd was out of hand, and Eddie's dress suit was soon reduced to rags. He managed to fight his way back into the theatre and you can imagine the amazement on Novarro's face when his dressing-room door was suddenly thrown open. There stood Eddie Ready, looking a tramp and shouting, "Well, clever boy, what are you going to do about this?" Eddie told me later that Novarro had to stump up £25 for a new suit.

I was playing the Palladium in 1933, and I had left my car in a street car park. I had been on the golf links in the morning, and I turned up at the theatre for the matinée resplendent in white flannel plus fours and jacket, blue socks, a blue tie, a natty little white cap and black-and-white shoes. I thought I was a killer.

Taken Before The Beak

It was an offence to park a car in the street for longer than two hours. I did the matinée and I got into conversation with Charlie Clapham, of Clapham and Dwyer. We were talking of this and that. We had some tea. I said: "I'd better go and move my car, Charlie." He said: "Oh, it's all right. Don't worry about that. You can leave it there all day. It'll be all right." I said, "Really?" He said, "Yes, they never bother." So I did the first performance in the evening. Then I said, "I must go and move my car, Charlie." "Oh, don't bother to move your car," he said. "Come and have a drink." So we did. Eventually, late at night, I got around to moving the car, and there was a policeman.

When my case came up, I had again come straight from the golf course, and was wearing this handsome white flannel outfit. The magistrate looked at me and he said: "Well, we have heard the facts. What have you got to say?" My mind was working furiously. I thought: talk yourself out of this, Ted, my boy. So I said: "Well, sir, you see, I'd been discussing some business with my agent in the theatre. The discussion had gone on all afternoon, all through tea and all through the evening—when I wasn't actually on the stage—and I'm afraid we didn't settle our business until after the show was over. I'm terribly sorry."

"Mm . . ." said the magistrate. "What was the nature of this business you were discussing with your agent?" I said: "A proposed visit to America." The magistrate leaned forward over the desk, and gazed at me resplendent in my white outfit and said: "America—hm—you have not been yet, have you? Two pounds fine."

My work was taking me all over the country now and I was dodging from the north of Scotland to Devon and back to the east coast and so on in my car. It once burst into flames on the way to Bristol, but it was on a trip from Aberdeen to Brighton that I had the scare of my life. I was to have played my home-town of Liverpool, but at the last moment the week's work was switched to the Hippodrome, Brighton, and I was faced with a journey of something like 500 miles. I set off as soon as I could after finishing my show on Saturday night, and began the journey.

Every motorist knows the almost hypnotic effect of staring fixedly at the winding ribbon of roadway on a long night drive. It was very dark and my only guide was the beam from the car headlights. I must have fallen asleep at the wheel—something that had never happened to me before—for suddenly before me loomed the stone wall of a bridge. I could almost see the lichen on the grey stone and the network of fissures on the face of the masonry. Instinctively I turned the wheel round for dear life, and just managed to scrape along the side of the wall with a horrifying sound of rasping metal. Some instinct must have warned me. If I had not opened my eyes in that split second I am pretty sure I should not be alive now.

Date With The Chorus

Luck—and it was luck again the next month that decreed that I should meet my wife. Moss Empires and the General Theatres Corporation were powerful rivals in the business and competed ruthlessly for the services of artists. With two great organizations in the field there was not, perhaps, enough first-class material to go round. I had an engagement to appear at the new Dominion Theatre in Tottenham Court Road, but a couple of days before that week's bill began, George Black, head of G.T.C., rang up my agent and said: "If Ted Ray plays at the Dominion Theatre next week he won't play for us any more." The point was that the two theatres were so near to one another that neither management felt like helping the other in presenting the most attractive bills available.

I told Moss Empires what had happened, and without comment they transferred me to the Empire, Birmingham. On the bill there was a potted revue called *The Saucy Nineties*. This act followed mine, and it opened with half a dozen tall and pretty girls doing a tap dance. On the Monday night I noticed that one of these girls—a very pretty one—was the first up off the stage past my dressing-room door both for the first and second houses. I thought it would be rather nice if I could strike up an acquaintanceship with her and ask her to come out to the pictures or for a cup of tea.

Chose The Wrong Girl

On the Tuesday, when the same thing happened again, first house, I knew exactly what to do. At the end of my act I used to do a little number in front of the curtain with a guitar; and with my violin and bow and my guitar under my arm it was not difficult to put myself into an apparently awkward position outside my dressing-room door, so that when this girl came up I could say: "Excuse me, would you mind getting the key out of my pocket to open the door?"

I heard the patter of feet up the stairs, I made this little speech, and when I turned round it was the wrong girl! She opened the door anyway. I said, "Thank you very much," and went in.

After I got over my disappointment, I reflected that the girl with whom I had struck up an acquaintance was not at all bad. I met her again and confessed the story. She laughed, and said: "That's my friend, Minty. My name is Sybil Stevens." I said: "Oh, I was rather wondering if you'd like to come out to the pictures with me. I was going to ask Minty." She said: "Well, why don't you?" I said: "Well, I don't know, now I think I'd rather like to ask you."

That week in Birmingham was one of the

"Sybil and I had to skip our honeymoon—I had to play Aberdeen. Here we are up there with my agent Bob Wade (right) and comedian Sam Shields"

pleasantest I have ever spent. I found Sybil delightful company, and as I drove away rather sadly on the Sunday on my way to the Hippodrome, Portsmouth, I wondered if I should ever see her again. Managements of touring revues do not plan their dates for the benefit of young people who have taken more than a passing liking to one another. But the following Monday—November 21—was my twenty-seventh birthday, and when I turned up at the theatre for the band rehearsal, there in the letter rack was a telegram. "Happy birthday," it said, and was signed Sybil Stevens.

At least that message told me that Sybil had been thinking about me and that our friendship was not entirely one-sided. I was boyishly thrilled and wrote to her that night, asking her if she would meet me in London on the following Sunday. She said she would, and after a rather shy and inarticulate meeting we went to the pictures, did the thing in style by going to dinner afterwards and agreed to write to each other regularly while we were away on tour.

As the weeks went by I found myself thinking more and more about her. Sometimes we had what I thought was the cruellest stroke of luck when we would miss each other by a few hours. I would scan the theatre "calls" in the stage papers every week, but I could always be sure that if I were in Newcastle, she would be in Plymouth. Finally, to my joy, came a week when we were both playing in London. You can be sure that I was at King's Cross in plenty of time to meet her train as it came in early one Sunday morning.

Next day I took Sybil on the boating lake in Hyde Park. Racing round and round in my head were all the things I wanted to say but could not, but suddenly I leaned forward and heard my voice say: "Sybil, would you like to meet my people?"

A fortnight later we were in my parents' home in Liverpool. On Sunday, we had had lunch, and there came that siesta period afterwards. I found myself in one room playing the gramophone, and Sybil was in the other talking to my kid sister, and suddenly I made up my mind I wanted to marry her. So I went into the front room and told my sister to get out, and I went over and said: "Sybil, I want to ask you something." She looked at me queerly and said, "Yes." I said: "Would you marry me, darling?" She burst into tears and flung her arms round me. Then she said, "When?"

"Well, would you like to get married in church or in a register office?"

"The sooner the better for me, because I love you, too."

Called In Ice-cream Man

We were married at Croydon, because I was living in that district. When we arrived there the registrar looked at Sybil, looked at me and looked at the best man, who was a chap called Danny Lipton, a tap dancer, and he said: "You have to have two witnesses—you only have one." I looked out of the window, and there was a fellow cycling along with an ice-cream tricycle. I lifted the window up and shouted: "Don't go away." And I dashed downstairs.

"Will you do me a favour? Would you act as a witness at my wedding?" I said to the ice-cream vendor.

"Who's going to look after my trolley?"

"You can keep an eye on it from the window."

"It's all very well for you . . ." he said.

"I'll give you half a crown," I put in. So up he came and stood there with his eye on his ice-cream trolley, witnessing what should have been a very touching ceremony. We gave the fellow his half-crown, and Danny Lipton, Sybil and I jumped into the car and went off to the nearest pub.

In this pub there was one little man sitting by the bar. "Would you like to have a drink with me? I've just been married," I asked. "Certainly, guv'nor," he said. So he had a beer, and disappeared. The next minute the pub was full of people. He had been round and tipped them all off. I spent the next quarter of an hour buying everybody beer.

I was working at the Brixton Empress that week, and that night I was up in my dressing-room—we had a big cake there and some drinks. Then somebody said: "You're wanted on the side of the stage."

"I've just done my act. What for?" I replied. "Never mind that, you're wanted." So I went down to the side of the stage. Sybil was nowhere to be seen, and Scott Sanders, the comedian, was on, finishing his act.

He stepped forward and said: "Ladies and gentlemen, I want to tell you something. We have somebody on the bill, somebody you all know—Ted Ray. And today he's just been married. Would you like to see him and his bride?" Of course, the audience roared, "Yes," and there was Sybil on the other side of the stage being dragged on—and they pulled me on, too.

They pelted us with paper rose petals and streamers and confetti. They brought on a doll's house, lit up, and presented it to Sybil. And Scott Sanders had his twin boys wheeled on in their pram. It was a marvellous send-off. But there was no honeymoon for us because the

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SUMMER PLATE. A platter arranged like this beforehand means trouble-free serving at table—and how appetizing it looks! Choose a variety of ready-cooked meats, and sausages if available, cooked and served cold. Note the unusual way of serving salad cream—Kraft, of course!—in scooped out, halved tomatoes. Decorate with watercress and stuffed olives for a festive touch. Green salad can be served separately.

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MY FAVOURITE SALAD

By Geraldo

White fish salad. *Mix cooked, chilled and flaked white fish with finely diced cucumber. Season with a little lemon juice, finely chopped parsley, salt and a dash of cayenne pepper to taste. Chill. Serve in individual lettuce cups with mayonnaise to bind. Cooked green peas can also be added.*

from—"282 Ways of Making a Salad" by Bebe Daniels & Jill Allgood, published by Cassell

Party touches for your salads

Salad "dresses up" for a cold buffet almost better than anything else—with the advantage that you can do it in advance, no last-minute touches needed!

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***RADISH ROSES.** With the tip of a pointed knife cut petals from the top of a radish, previously washed and trimmed, almost to the bottom. Place in cold water and watch the 'rose' take shape.*

***CELERY CURLS.** Take a short length of celery and cut thin strips from each end, towards the centre portion. Soak in cold water till the celery curls.*

***TOMATO STARS.** Take a firm tomato and with a pointed knife cut the skin in zigzag fashion round the centre. Slice the soft inside straight through and serve each half-tomato 'star'-edge upwards.*

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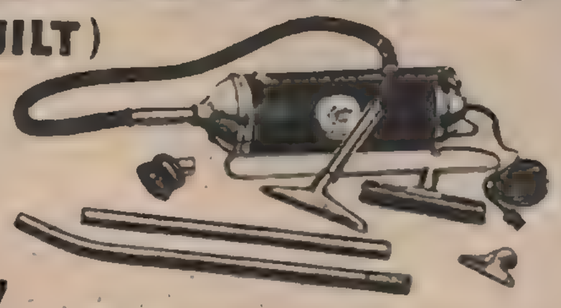

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BRANCHES IN MOST PRINCIPAL TOWNS

now? Do old people, people of Aunt Ethel's sort—do many of them die in poverty?"

The girl said cautiously: "I think a good many of them have a pretty bad time. It's difficult to tell, because one doesn't hear a lot about them. Aunt Ethel could have died like that anywhere—it wasn't anything to do with England. It could have happened in Australia."

"It could, but it doesn't," said Jane.

"Why not?"

"I think this country's too prosperous for that to happen. An old lady who was as old-fashioned and as proud as that would almost certainly have some relation, some son or grandson or nephew, who was making a whole heap of money, to whom the little assistance that she'd need would be a flea-bite. It *could* happen here, as you say, but I can't imagine it doing so."

"She had some odd ideas," Jennifer said presently. "It all happened within twenty-four hours of her death, so I suppose she would be a bit funny."

"What sort of ideas?"

The girl said: "It was when your letter came. I think she got to feeling that if you had twenty-two thousand a year, you'd be living in the way that she lived in when she was young—a great big house with three servants and a butler, and grooms, and hunters, and being presented at Court—all that sort of thing. I think she thought that if I came out here to see you, I'd be getting back into the world she knew when she was young. . . ."

"Poor old dear," Jane said softly. "You mean, she was a bit confused." She was silent for a while. "There are only a few big station owners in the Western District. They have big homes, and play a lot of polo, and they hunt, and give dances, and get presented to the Governor-General. They *do* live rather in the way Aunt Ethel lived when she was young, but there aren't very many of them. Ninety-five per cent of graziers are people like ourselves, people who've always been hard up until the last few years."

She laid her darning in the basket, and got out her cigarette-case, and gave Jennifer one; they sat smoking in silence for a little. "I don't know what's going to be the end of it," she said. "This property would fetch about ninety thousand pounds at present-day prices, and it's all free of debt. That's heaps to leave the children when we die. We want them to work, not live on money that we leave them. We want to go on working here ourselves; it's what we like doing. And these enormous sums of money keep coming in. I don't know what we'll do with it, I'm sure."

"Make a trip home?" suggested Jennifer.

"We've thought of that," said Jane. "I don't know that I really want to go to England now. I don't think I'd know anybody there at all. Jack sometimes says he'd like to make a trip to Europe and go to Gallipoli, but he doesn't really want to, I don't think." She sat smoking in silence for a minute. "If Angie goes next year, we might go home the year after to see her. But that wouldn't take much money, not compared with what we're making. . . ."

Jennifer smiled. "You'll have to buy another grandfather clock."

Jane laughed. "I know it was stupid, Jenny, but I *did* like buying it. Made in Chester in 1806, before this country was even explored. It's a lovely thing to have." She spoke more seriously. "No, if things go on like this, some day I'd like to rebuild the homestead."

"Rebuild this house?"

Jane shook her head. "I'd like to build another house down by the river, and turn this over to a foreman. I'll show you where I want to have it. A new brick house designed by a good architect, rather like an English house, but single storey; a house with English trees and an English lawn and a garden all around it, like we used to have at home when I was a girl."

"An English country house," said Jennifer thoughtfully.

"Like that in a way, but adapted to the country and the station." She paused. "I believe a good many people will start doing that, if the money goes on like this."

"So you'll get a lot of English country houses here?"

"We might," said Jane. "After all, the English country houses came when agriculture was doing well, and agriculture's doing well here now."

"You mean, there's something in what Aunt Ethel was trying to say?"

"There might well be. Old people have a knack of being right, sometimes."

JENNIFER settled down at Leonora very happily. She would have found it even pleasanter if the weather had been cooler, and she came to realize the value of Jane's insistence that she should avoid the city at the height of the hot weather till she was acclimatized. It was an exceptionally hot January. Each day the sun rose in a cloudless sky at dawn and set in a cloudless evening sky at dusk; each night Angela and Jennifer lay with few coverings in the somewhat stuffy little bedroom of the homestead, unable to sleep till midnight for the heat. Each day thin wreaths of smoke behind the mountains told of forest fires in the high country to the south of them, each day Jack Dorman listened to the wireless weather forecasts, worried, for some news of rain.

"Don't like the look of it at all," he said more than once. "It's a fair cow."

He was too worried and preoccupied for Jennifer to bother him with questions, and Angela knew little about the station, and cared less. She asked

TAKE MY TIP

THIS is how nine-year-old Ian replaced the watering can rose he lost. He got an old rubber ball and cut a hole in it, a little smaller than the diameter of the watering can spout. Opposite the hole, he snipped a pattern of very small holes with scissors. To fit, he just wriggled the large hole over the spout.—Alex. H. Lashbrooke, Christchurch, Hants.

JOHN BULL pays three guineas, on publication, for simple, original tips that show other readers how to carry out useful jobs in better ways. Address contributions to TAKE MY TIP, JOHN BULL, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1, including (if they help) diagrams or photographs with the text. It is regretted that contributions cannot be returned unless they are accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Tim Archer to tell her what the trouble was, and he said that the boss was worried over the condition of the top paddock, bordering on the forest. The spring up there which usually ran all through the summer had dried up some weeks before and the paddock had got very dry; on account of the lack of water they had moved the stock out. The paddock, in consequence, had been little grazed for some time and the grass was far too long for safety; if a fire should run through the forest to the Leonora boundary it would sweep across that paddock in a flash.

"The trouble is with these darn fires you don't know where they'll stop," said Tim. "You can't do much about it, either."

It was on one of these cloudless days that Jane went into town with Angela in the Morris; to make a break for her, Jennifer had volunteered to get the dinner so that Jane could dine at the hotel with Angela. She served the inevitable hot roast mutton with potatoes and vegetables competently, though she was dripping with sweat; Tim and Mario finished the meal, and helped her with the washing-up. Then they went out to their work, and Jack Dorman stood with her on the veranda looking at the wreaths of smoke rising almost straight up into the sky behind Buller.

He said anxiously: "I believe that's nearer. Think I'll run up the road a bit in the Mercury, 'n see if I can find out where she's burning. Coming?"

She got into the car with him and they started up the road towards the mountain. They passed the Merrijig hotel and went on towards Lamirra and the timber camps.

"We'll run up the road a bit to where they're cutting," Jack said when they got outside Merrijig. "We'll get a view over the ridge up there, and see for ourselves."

They drove on up a broad, smooth, well-engineered road winding up the mountainside; he told her that this was a timber road made for the passage of the timber lorries getting the wood out; it was designed eventually for use as a main highway.

They stopped to ask the ganger of a group of road-makers what the fire position was. He was reassuring; he said that it had not crossed the King River and he did not think it would; the forest fire patrol were there and they had cleared a fire-break three miles long to save the forest timber. Jennifer sat in the car while the men gossiped, understanding only about half of what they said; the names of mountains, rivers, people, and official bodies meant nothing to her and she did not fully understand what it was all about. It was quiet in the forest, or it would have been, but for the distant and rhythmic rumbling of a bulldozer at work.

"MISS BRO—oh, there you are"

She sat listening to the bulldozer as the men talked. The noises repeated in a regular cycle; a roaring acceleration of the motor followed by a few seconds of steady running, then a period of idling, and then a few seconds of light running as the thing reversed, another idling period, and the cycle began again. It varied very little; she sat listening to it dreamily, half asleep in the coolness of the forest.

The cycle was disturbed, and woke her from her doze. A rumbling of heavy timber broke in and the roaring of the engine mounted suddenly to a climax, and then stopped dead. There was a noise of tumbling machinery and a continued rumbling of rolling logs; a few men shouted in the distance, their voices puny and lost among the greater noises. Then everything was quiet again.

The men broke off their discussion of the fire and looked in the direction of the row. "What's going on down there?" asked Jack.

"Bulldozer at work, shifting logs," the ganger said. "Sounds like he's got into trouble. Those bloody things are always getting into trouble. We had one bogged up to the seat last winter; took a winch and a day's work to pull him out."

A quarter of a mile farther on a track led down the hill to the right. As they approached they saw a man running up this track towards the road, a man in lumber jacket and dirty canvas trousers, a rough man, running clumsily uphill. He waved at the car when he saw it; they stopped and waited for him to come up to them.

"Aw, look," he panted. "Give us a run down the road to Lamirra. There's been an accident in there, and two blokes got hurt bad. I got to telephone the doctor and the ambulance at Banbury, 'n find a bloke called Splinter."

Jennifer opened the door of the utility and slid across the seat towards Jack Dorman; the man tumbled in beside her and slammed the door. He was panting and streaming with sweat. Jack Dorman began to turn the car. "It's a proper muck up," the man said urgently. "I got to get Splinter quick."

The car swung round and headed down the road. "Where d'you want to go?"

"You know the office building, other side the bridge? They'll telephone the ambulance from there. Maybe they'll know where Splinter's working."

Jack Dorman devoted his attention to the road as they went flying round the curves down into the valley. Once as they swung violently round a corner with a scream of tyres the man was flung heavily against Jennifer; he wrenched himself off her and said: "Sorry, lady."

"That's all right," she said. "Who is this man you've got to find?"

"Who? Splinter? He's the doctor here."

Jack Dorman, eyes glued to the road, said: "Is that the chap that goes fishing at the weekends?"

"That's right," the man said, "he's just one of these D.P.s, working in the timber with the rest of us. He's a doctor in his own country, like. He's not allowed to be a doctor here."

They came to the office building at the bottom of the stream, a small weatherboard shack of three rooms; the man flung himself from the car.

"I'll wait here a bit," Jack Dorman called after him. "'Case you want to go back."

They sat in the car for a few minutes, waiting. "Where is the nearest proper doctor?" the girl asked.

"Banbury," he said. "There's a hospital there with an ambulance, and there's a doctor—Dr. Jennings."

"How far is that from here?"

"About seventeen miles."

She was a little shocked; accustomed as she was to city life it was difficult to realize that there could be no doctor close at hand. "How long will it take him to get here?"

He hesitated. "That depends. If he's in Banbury and he's free, he might be out here in an hour. But I believe this is his Woods Point day."

"What's that?"

"He goes to Woods Point once a week," he said. "They haven't got a doctor there. I think this is the day he goes there—Tuesday. I'm pretty sure it is."

"How far is that from Banbury?"

"About forty miles."

She said: "You mean, it could be hours before he could get here?"

"Too right."

"But what happens, in a case like this?"

"Just got to do the best you can," he said. "Most doctoring for accidents is common sense."

They sat together in the car, waiting. Then the man that they had brought down from the woods came to the door of the office with the manager, a man called Forrest. Jack Dorman knew him slightly as an acquaintance in various local bars.

"Eh, Jim," he said. "Got a bit of trouble."

Jim Forrest glanced at him in recognition, and then at the new Mercury utility. He crossed the road to Dorman. "Aw, look, Jack," he said. "Are you busy?"

"Not particularly."

"Joe here, he says there's two men got hurt bad, up where you picked him up upon the road. They'll have to be fetched down and taken into hospital, unless we can get the ambulance to come out for them. Could you stand by a few minutes while we get through to Banbury? If we've got to send them in, they'll travel easier in this utility than in one of my trucks."

"Do anything I can. I'll run them into Banbury if you want it."

"Thanks a lot. I've got the call in now. Say, while you're waiting, could you run Joe up to Camp Four, fetch a man called Zlinter?"

"I know him. That's the chap that fishes?"

"That's right. He's a D.P. doctor, been working here for quite a while. I got him on the telephone and he's gone down to his camp by truck, pick up his stuff. I'd appreciate it if you'd slip down there 'n pick him up. Joe can show you. By the time you've got back here I'll have spoken to Banbury."

The utility went sliding off with Joe in it again; a mile down the road it turned into the camp and ran between the rows of huts under the gum trees, and stopped outside the fourth on the right. Joe got out and called to a man at the door. "Hey," he said. "Seen Splinter anywhere about?"

The man said: "He's inside."

Joe vanished into the hut and Jack Dorman got out of the utility with Jennifer; together they unfastened the black twill cover of the truck-like body. Joe came out carrying in his arms a very large first-aid box. "Put it in the back," said Dorman.

A tall, dark man came to the door of the hut and glanced at the utility and then at Dorman; recognition came to him. "So," he said, "we have already met, upon the Howqua. It is your car, this?"

"That's right."

Carl Zlinter paused in thought. "I have much to take," he said. "It will be all right to drive this car into the woods, up to the accident?"

"I should think so. The ground's pretty hard."

"I will take everything, then, in the car."

He went back into the hut, and reappeared with Joe, carrying five cartons roughly packed with packages of cotton-wool, dressings, splints, bandages, bottles of antiseptic; these with a worn leather case completed his equipment. It only took three or four minutes. "Now we are ready to go," he said.

Joe got up into the back with the stores, and Zlinter got into the front of the utility with Jennifer and Dorman. "It is better to bring everything," he said. "Much will be not needed, but for the one thing left behind—it is better to take everything."

Dorman said: "Go back first to the office?"

"I think so. Perhaps the ambulance and doctor are already on the way. In any case, we must pass by that place."

They slid off up the road again to the weatherboard office. The manager came out to meet them. "Can't get through yet," he said. "You go on up, and I'll be along soon as the call comes through."

Jack Dorman said: "The doctor's day in Woods Point, isn't it?"

"I don't know."

"Tuesday. I've an idea it is."

Jim Forrest made a grimace. "It would be. Will you take Zlinter up there, Jack? I'll be up there myself soon as this call comes through." He turned to the Czech. "Do what you can, Carl, till the doctor gets here."

"Okay, Mr. Forrest," said Carl Zlinter. "I will do the best that I can."

The utility moved off and up the hill. Carl Zlinter sat in silence, mentally conning over the stores that he had brought with him, the information of the accident that he had got from Joe. A man called Bertie Hanson with a crushed leg trapped beneath the upturned bulldozer, a man called Harry Peters, the bulldozer driver, unconscious with a head injury. He was not troubled by the injuries; his long experience in the medical service of the German Army had accustomed him to front-line casualties in Russia and in Normandy. It was the lack of stores that worried him most; here was no blood plasma and no equipment for transfusion, and no dressing station.

Passing the road gang, they reached the track that led down off the road; Jack Dorman headed the Mercury down this timber lane in low gear, and they went lurching and swaying down the hill between the trees. Directed by Joe they turned presently and traversed the hillside to the right and came out into a sloping open space where all the timber had been felled. Down at the bottom of this sloping space, upon the edge of the unfelled forest, there was a bulldozer lying on its side and forepart, lying across a log about two feet in diameter. Two more tree-trunks lay above the bulldozer, one caught upon the spade, the other poised in the air above it, perilously, apparently about to fall. There were men with ropes working carefully around this game of spillikins, attempting to guy back the log poised in mid-air.

"My word," Jack Dorman breathed. "You wouldn't think a bulldozer could get like that. . . ." The girl from London sat silent. These things which had happened in the forest were outside all her experience.

Dorman drove the Mercury slowly forward till its way was barred by

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scrub and timber; then he stopped it, and the dark foreigner with them got out and made his way quickly to the accident. He was wearing soiled khaki drill trousers and a grey cotton shirt open at the neck; his arms were bare to the elbow and very tanned, yet he had unmistakably the air of a doctor. Dorman followed after him with Joe, and the girl came along behind them, uncertain what she was going to see.

She saw a man pinned beneath the bulldozer by one leg bent below the knee in an unnatural attitude; he lay upon the ground beneath the log that rested one end on the bulldozer spade, most insecurely. His face was badly lacerated on one side, and there was blood congealed upon the coat that had been thrust as a pillow beneath his head. He was conscious, and the eyes looked up with recognition at Carl Zlinter.

The lips moved. "Good old Splinter," he muttered. "Better than any bloody doctor in the state. Get me out of this."

The dark man dropped down on his knees beside him. "Lie very quiet now," he said. "I am giving an injection which will make you sleep. Lie very quiet now, and sleep." He opened his case, fitted up the hypodermic with quick, accurate movements, sterilizing it with alcohol, broke the neck of a capsule and filled it, and sterilized the forearm of the man upon the ground, all in about thirty seconds. He drove the needle in and pressed the plunger down. "Lie very quiet now, and go to sleep," he said softly. "Everything now will be all right. When you wake up you will be in hospital, in bed."

The man's lips moved. "German bastard," he said faintly. "Good old Splinter. Good old . . . bastard. . . ."

CARL ZLINTER got up from beside the man and crossed to the other casualty. Men parted as he came, and Jennifer saw lying on the ground the second man. He lay upon his face, or nearly so, apparently unconscious. He had been bleeding from the ears and the nose and the mouth; he lay still, breathing with a snoring sound, irregularly. Great gaping wounds were on his scalp, the fair hair matted with blood, with white bone splinters showing here and there. Jennifer bit her lip; she must not show fear or horror before these men.

"We didn't like to move him till you came, Splinter," said somebody. "The poor beggar's got his skull all cracked. We reckoned it was best to leave him as he was."

The dark man did not answer, but dropped down on his knees beside the casualty and began preparing his injection. Gently he bared an arm and sterilized it, and thrust the needle in.

Presently he got to his feet. "We will need stretchers," he said. "Two bed-frames, each with a mattress. I will not wait for the ambulance. Mr. Dorman, please. Will you fetch bed-frames and mattresses for us, in the utility?"

"Sure. One of you chaps come with me 'n show me where to go."

The utility went off up the cleared glade, and Jennifer was left with the lumbermen and the casualties. The dark foreigner went back to the first man with the trapped foot and dropped on one knee beside him; gently he lifted one eyelid, and felt the wrist. He bent to an examination of the leg beneath the bulldozer.

"Is it possible to lift this thing?" he asked.

"Aw, look," said one, "it's a crook job. We got to take the top stick out backwards first, 'n when we get the weight from off the butt of this one it'll roll off on the top of him. We got to shore up this one first, 'n then take the top one off backwards, 'n rig a sheerlegs 'n a tackle, 'n try and get this one off backwards, too. After that we might roll the dozer over, or jack it up maybe. But it's a long job, Splinter, 'n the stick'll roll off on him if we don't watch out."

"How long will it take?"

The man said: "It'll be dark by eight. If we can get the stuff up here 'n lamps 'n that, we might get the dozer shifted about midnight."

"Can you safely move these sticks, working in the dark, so that there can be no further accident for him?"

The man said uneasily: "We got to get the poor devil out of it, Splinter. But it's a crook job, working in the dark. I'd a sight rather do it in the day."

The dark man stood in silence for a minute. The men stood round him waiting for a lead, and Jennifer could sense the trust they had in him. "I do not think that we can save the foot in any case," he said. "It is practically severed now. If we should lift the dozer by midnight and get him out of it, the leg must then come off in hospital. I think the risk now is too great to move these sticks, for nothing to be gained, but to risk injuring him more. I think it will be better if I take the leg off now and get him to the hospital. We will wait for a message first, to find out if the doctor comes."

Somebody spat, and said: "I wouldn't guarantee to shift them sticks without one slipping." There was a long silence after that.

Presently Carl Zlinter crossed to the other man, and knelt down by him again, and very gently began to run his fingers over the skull, exploring the unnatural depressions of the scars. He lifted his head after a time, and said:

"Is there water, water in a clean billy? There is an enamel bowl in one of the cartons—use that. And a clean piece of cloth, of lint from the blue square package in the big carton. Somebody with very clean hands open it, and give me a piece of the lint."

Water was brought in a billy and a man found the package of lint. He glanced at his hands, and then at Jennifer. "You do it," he said. "You got cleaner hands than any of us here."

She tore open the wrappings and bared the lint. She said to the dark man: "Do you want disinfectant in the water?"

"Please. The big blue bottle, just a little. About one tablespoonful." He glanced at her. "Not that—the other bottle. That is good. Now give it to me here, and a small piece of the lint."

She took the bowl and the lint to him; he dipped his hands in the solution and wiped them with the lint, and threw the lot away. She got him more lint and disinfectant while the men stood round them in a circle, watching, and he began very carefully to wipe the dirt from the wounds on the man's head.

"Scissors," he said. "In the leather case, the middle one of the three pairs. And the forceps also. Put them in the water, in the bowl."

She brought them to him, and stood with the lumbermen looking down upon him as he worked.

Presently there was a faint noise on the road above them. A man by Jennifer raised his head. "Truck coming down," he said. "That'll be Mr. Forrest, come to say about the ambulance."

They listened to the approaching truck till it emerged into the glade, and stopped near the wrecked bulldozer. The manager got out and came to them, and Zlinter got to his feet and went to meet him. The men crowded round, Jennifer with them.

"There's no ambulance, Zlinter," he said. "It's gone to Woods Point with the doctor for an appendicitis case. They don't know if it's coming back tonight or not."

One of the men said, disgustedly: "No bloody doctor, either?"

"No doctor," said Jim Forrest. "I'm sorry, cobber, but that's the way it is."

"Aw, look," said one, "we've *got* a doctor. Old Splinter, he's a doctor, isn't he?"

"What about it, Zlinter?" asked the manager. "What's the damage?"

"It is not good," the dark man said. "This man, I think we should take off the foot and take him into hospital, not to leave him here for hours while we lift the dozer." The manager pulled him to one side. "It is all right, he cannot hear. He is now well doped. We cannot save the foot in any case, and we must try now to control the shock, or he will die. If he is left here for many hours, I think he will die."

"Take the foot off now, and get him out of it?"

"That is the right thing to do. He must be in a warm bed, soon, with many blankets and hot bottles; he is already very cold. I think that he is very bad, that one. I do not think that he has been a healthy man; perhaps he drinks too much."

"What about the other one?"

THEY crossed to the fractured skull case. "This one," the dark man said, "he seems more badly, but I do not think so. His skull is broken in three places, but he is a healthy man and there is yet no damage that is not repairable. I have seen men as bad as this recover, and be very good—quite well men. With him, it will be necessary to move him very carefully to where he can be operated on, to lift the pressure of the bones upon the brain. If we can so arrange that he is dealt with quickly, then I think he will have a good chance to recover and be well."

Jim Forrest bit his lip. "Have you done operations of that sort, Zlinter?"

"I have done such operations many times," the man said. "But not since the war ended."

"Where did you do them?"

"In the war with Russia," the man said. "In France, also, at the battle of Falaise. I was surgeon in the army. Many times I have done emergency trephine. It is not difficult, if you are very careful and very, very clean. The danger will lie in moving him to where an operation can be done. I could not do that here."

The manager stood in silence for a minute. "Jack Dorman will be back in a few minutes," he said at last. "He's bringing bed-frames and mattresses. They'll ride softer in that utility than in the truck."

He walked a little way away from the men, deep in thought. He knew that he was in a delicate position here, and he wanted a few moments to think it over. Zlinter had no qualifications as a doctor in the State of Victoria, but he was probably competent to do a trephine operation and it seemed logical that he should be allowed to do it. Indeed, he was the only man within reach who could attempt it; without his ministrations the man might well die. The obvious place to do the operation was in Banbury hospital, but would the matron agree to a lumberman who claimed to be an unregistered practitioner doing such an operation in her hospital?

Almost certainly she would not. Yet it might well be that while everyone was arguing the man would die. He might die anyway, on the road to Banbury.

FORREST went back to Carl Zlinter. "What will you do, Zlinter?" he asked. "Will you take them into Banbury? What's the best thing to do?"

"Will the doctor come to Banbury tonight?"

"He's operating at Woods Point on the appendicitis case this evening. If he comes back, it will be very late. We can get him on the telephone at the hotel at about six o'clock."

"He will not be back at Banbury before ten or eleven?"

"I don't think so."

Carl Zlinter stood in silence for a minute. He was very well aware of his position; if he operated on this fractured skull and the man died, there would be trouble and he might end up in prison, a bad start to his new life in Australia. He said at last: "I will take off the foot of the man at the dozer now—we cannot save that foot. For the other one, we must take him very carefully down to Lamirra as he is, and you must telephone again from there. I will decide then what is best to do."

"Okay, Zlinter. What help do you want?"

"Somebody who knows, to hand me things from the case, and to keep clean and sterile as possible. The young lady was good just now." He looked round, and saw Jennifer standing a little aside.

"Please," he said softly to her. "Come here." She came towards him. "I am going to take off that man's foot," he said. "Have you ever seen an operation?"

She shook her head. "Never."

He looked her in the eyes. "Would you be afraid to help me? If you cannot do it, you must say so now. Can you help this man, and not faint or do any foolish thing?"

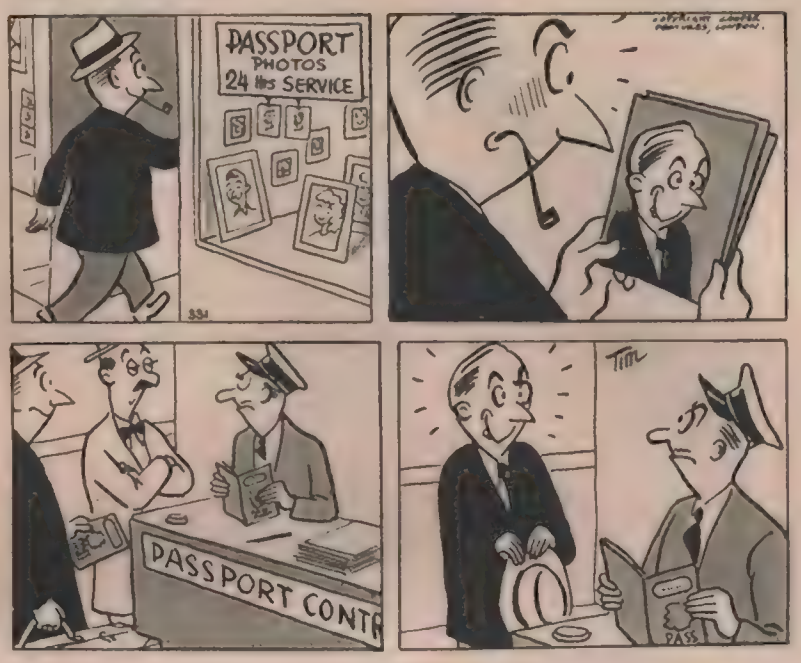
"I'll do my best," she said quietly. She told herself fiercely: I must not faint. I must not faint.

He smiled at her, and she was suddenly confident. "It will be nothing difficult," he said. "Just to keep giving me the things I shall want. I will show you the things before we begin. Just to do what I shall tell you quietly, and to keep a calm head."

He took her to the utility, and began rummaging through his cartons for the dishes and appliances that he would need. He picked up a white rubber sheet and carried it over to the bulldozer, and laid it on the ground beside the trapped man, immediately beneath the menace of the hanging log. She helped him to arrange it neatly on the fragrant, leaf-covered ground beside the man. "Now, come with me," he said.

To be continued next week

OH, JOHNNY! *by TIM*



THE SMILER

Continued from page 8

his lack of haste made him terrifying. "If you want me to open you up and empty you out on to the road, you've just got to say the word."

Captain Blamey climbed meekly into the passenger seat. The door was slammed. The next moment Bird had jumped in and taken the wheel. He drove very fast, but it was not entirely on account of the speed of the car that Captain Blamey found himself sweating.

First five, then ten miles went by without incident or interruption. Captain Blamey remained, huddled and motionless, in his seat. Then Bird breathed a deep sigh of satisfaction. It was a letting out of the breath—in which were both relief and triumph. They were past the outermost of the anti-escape rings.

At the seventh milestone from Exeter there is a lonely bit of road, with a high bank on one side, and a hedge and ditch on the other. Bird eased the car to a halt and climbed out.

"Get out," he said. "This is the end of the ride."

"For God's sake — I promise I won't——"

"Turn round, lovely. No one's going to hurt you." As the captain obeyed, Bird's hand came up from behind him. In it he held a big torch, which he had taken from the pocket beside the driving seat. Captain Blamey went down like a felled tree. His body had hardly touched the road before Bird had got his arms under him and pulled him through a gap in the hedge and into the field beyond.

A car was coming from behind and coming fast. Bird crouched behind the hedge. He looked like a great beast disturbed over his kill. The oncoming car checked for a moment, probably as the driver sighted the stationary vehicle. Then it accelerated and passed on.

Working with furious concentration, Bird tied Captain Blamey's hands behind him, using the captain's belt, knotted his shoelaces together and bundled him into the ditch.

He took no trouble to make a careful job of it. All he needed was a quarter of an hour to get the car into Exeter and lose it.

HENRY WHALEY worked in the engine sheds near Exeter. He was a cleaner, an industrious workman, due for the next promotion to fireman. He might some day hope to be an engine-driver. He also had a secret life, which started after dark, and about which his employers, and even his fellow workers, knew nothing. It was this which had brought him into contact with Bird, who at that time had been working in the West Country.

It had been almost two years ago when Bird had made the extraordinary suggestion.

"You're *giving* me twenty-five quid?" said Whaley, staggered.

"Lending it," said Bird gently. "I'll be calling for it some day. See you keep it handy."

"But——"

"You know what's up there, don't you?" Bird had pointed vaguely northwards.

"The moor—yes. But even if you get caught, how do you know——?"

"I don't know. But there's only four places long-term men go to. I'm leaving twenty-five quid near each of 'em, see?"

"It sounds crazy to me," said Whaley.

"It's plain sense. I've got plenty of money now. That means I've got plenty of friends—no offence, Harry boy. It's when I've been put down, when I'm on the run, when I've got no money—that's when I'll need friends. See?"

It had been all of two years ago, but Harry Whaley could have repeated that conversation to you word for word. He had never forgotten it. It was about dusk that evening when he reached his home, in one of the back streets behind the railway yard. A man was walking behind him. He had

"I'll bet your kid brother is getting scared. Maybe we'd better take him home"

noticed him out of the corner of his eye without thinking twice about him: a man wearing a military-looking mackintosh, a full two sizes too small for him.

Whaley turned into his front gate, went up the short path and opened the door. Then he realized that the other man was following him. He was so quick and so close behind him that he could not have shut the door even had he wished to.

The next moment he was standing in silence in the dark front hall, looking at Bird while Bird looked back at him. He was a big man himself, but the convict topped him by an inch.

"Well, Harry boy," said Bird. "Who's crazy now?"

"Get out," said Whaley breathlessly.

"In my own time," said Bird. "There's twenty-five pounds' worth of friendship first."

"You can take your money and get going."

"All in good time. Are you alone?"

"My—my wife's due home in ten minutes."

It was clumsily done. Bird glanced for a moment at the coat rack. There were two coats on it, both unmistakably male garments.

"Don't lie," he said. "You're still alone. Come to think of it, you wouldn't want a woman in the house, not in your line of business."

"Lay off that. I done with all that."

"You haven't done with me," said Bird. "The first thing I want is a bath—and I'll take the first ten pounds of that twenty-five in clothes. One of the reasons I picked you was because you were my size."

"You'll take the money and go."

"Listen," said Bird. He leaned forward, and his bulk seemed to fill one end of the hall. His voice deepened. The purring note had gone. "I'm on the run. If I get caught it's six months, maybe a year for extra. All right. I can take that. But I've only got to say the word, and you're coming back in with me. It'll be seven or ten for you, Harry boy. Just so that we understand each other."

There was silence. Whaley made a little move with his hand. A moment of indecision.

"All right," said Bird. "Now where's the bathroom?"

Half an hour later Bird was standing in front of Whaley's fire. He was neatly shaved. He looked and felt a new man. The suit was not ill-fitting. He had a fawn raincoat over his arm and a rakish olive-green felt hat hid his prison hair-cut. With his rough complexion he might have passed for a farmer, togged up for a visit to town.

"Very handsome, Harry boy," said Bird. "I won't forget you." He fingered the notes in his pocket. "I'll be back for the balance before very long."

"You've got it all," said Whaley, "and more."

"That's what you think," said Bird calmly. "I reckon another fifty won't hurt you. After all, before this I only had one thing on you. Now I've got two, haven't I? You've helped an escaping convict. You can go down for that alone, Harry. Think of that. That's something else I got to keep quiet about. I should have said it was cheap at fifty." He was flicking Whaley quite deliberately. "What was the time of the London train you were so obliging as to look up for me. Nine-fifty wasn't it? Well, I must be moving on. I want a bite first. Unless you were going to ask me to supper?"

Still Whaley said nothing. When Bird let himself out he was still standing beside the fire, his hands in his pockets.

Outside it was now quite dark and Bird moved with confidence. In the working-class shopping district the shops kept late hours and he had one or two pieces of business to transact. First he bought a large, cheap suitcase. Clear of the shop, he made down an unlighted side street, took off his raincoat and packed it in the bag. Then he walked back to a shop he had already passed and taken note of. It was part pawnbroker's, part second-hand clothes store. Here he bought himself a worn but sober-looking black great-coat and a black homburg hat. As he was on his way out he saw, and added to his purchases, a pair of old fashioned, steel, half-moon spectacles.

After that he made for the station and studied the indicator board. He did not seem to be looking at the trains for Waterloo, but eventually found what he wanted—a slow, branch-line train for Dulverton. He had forty minutes in hand and occupied it by eating a large meal.

AT eleven o'clock that night the Exeter police received a message. The man at the other end of the line was whispering, and his voice was shaking, either with excitement or anger; but what he had to say was clear enough.

As a result of this message, when the 9.50 from Exeter arrived at Waterloo in the early hours of the following morning it was met by two squad crews of the Metropolitan Police, who seemed deeply interested in the larger men passengers; particularly in those wearing fawn raincoats and green hats.

This may have accounted for the freedom from molestation of a sober-looking gentleman in a black coat and hat, peering benevolently over half-moon glasses, who arrived two hours later at Paddington in the Taunton train.

The news of the escape was in the newspapers and being broadcast within a few hours. Late that night a farmer's wife at Loughborough met and identified Bird. Before morning she had competitors. A sailor coming home from a party in Plymouth, a publican at Calne, a schoolmistress at Nottingham, two schoolboys going to school at Much Hadham, a Baptist minister returning from a sick-bed in Crouch End and a mental defective on leave of absence from an institute at Perth. All had seen and all had definitely recognized Bird.

"The trouble is," said Chief Inspector Huth, who had been given the thankless job of co-ordinating the efforts of the Metropolitan Police in the hunt, "the real trouble is that one of them may be right. . . ."

None of them was. In fact, Bird was in Gravesend. The intensive police comb-out of hotels, lodgings and boarding houses had not worried him. He was living quietly with a friend.

Alfred Macey was a stevedore's ganger's foreman, who did most of his work under contract on the cargo boats at Tilbury. He was also a receiver of stolen goods and a pedlar of smuggled goods. He was the nearest thing to a real friend that Bird possessed.

Macey was a big, silent man, almost as big as Bird himself. He brought the morning papers in when he came back from the early shift at the dock.

"You seem to have hit 'em this time," he said.

BIRD glanced at the headlines. Vanity was not one of his weaknesses, but he could not help noticing that his escape was something of a sensation, occupying more space than a Cabinet crisis.

"The heat's on," he said, cheerfully. "When are those two monkeys of yours calling?"

"They're coming round this evening," said Macey.

With the dusk they arrived, two small, docile-looking men with the pale, coffee-coloured skin and coarse black hair of Central India.

"This one answers to Ali," said Macey. The little man bobbed and smiled. "I call this one Tinker. I can't get my tongue round his name." An even smaller man flashed his white teeth ingratiatingly.

The talk went on for a long time. Sketch plans were drawn and studied. In the end some money passed over and the little men disappeared as silently as they had come.

"How do you know you can trust 'em?" asked Bird.

"Trust a native," said Macey—he put his big red thumb on the table and cracked the joint—"when you've got him there. Those two beauties have been peddling me hashish. I know enough to get 'em a two-stretch each."

"Couldn't they do that for you?"

"They aren't that brave," said Macey.

"All right," said Bird. "Let's run over it once more."

"We're finished the second hold in three days' time. There'll be enough room in the top for you. It's mixed cargo—crated stuff and baled kapok. You ought to be all right. Those two monkeys will keep you supplied with food and drink. They're both mess boys. It shouldn't be difficult for them. And you pay them a quarter now—"

"And three quarters the other end," said Bird with a wide smile.

The paper next day carried a reward offer. It was for the sum of £2,000, and was being put up half by the Insurance Offices and half by the Jewel Merchants and Allied Trades Association.

"Information," said the notice, "given to Mr. Stanley Peters at 13 Queen's Arcade Buildings, North Finchley, and leading directly to the apprehension of Bird—" would qualify for this very substantial prize. The notice, which had been drafted very carefully by the legal advisers of the Association, went on to suggest, without actually stating it, that provided the information was effective in achieving the desired result, no very searching questions would be asked as to the source it came from. The reward would be paid promptly, and in cash.

When Chief Superintendent Huth

read the notice, he managed to grin.

Prison Officer Millsom was sitting opposite to him, looking uncomfortable in his rarely-used town clothes. His head was swathed in white bandages like a cocoon, but he still managed to look cheerful. The chief superintendent, who had got to the top by using his imagination and following his hunches had sent an ambulance to the prison hospital for him. Bird's jailer, he reasoned, ought to know something about him.

"What are his weaknesses?" It was not the first time he had asked the question.

"It seems an odd thing to say," said Millsom, "but I've never spotted any. He's fighting fit. He's a good organizer, and he's got a sort of"—he moved his hands helplessly as he looked for the right word—"a sort of criminal imagination. He thinks ahead, and plans a thing—then he does it."

"Any girl friends?"

"Never heard of one."

"Drink? Drugs?"

"I should say he's too fit for that sort of lark, sir."

"Damn it," said Huth. "He's a crook. There must be something."

"The only thing that did occur to me," said Millsom diffidently, "is that he's got a sort of well-developed—over-developed, you might say—sense of humour. He's a smiler."

The superintendent looked at him reproachfully. "Even if that's right," he said, "it's not very *constructive*, is it? What are we going to do? Dress all our men up in false noses and party hats and watch to see who laughs at 'em most?"

If Millsom felt aggrieved he made allowance for the fact that the superintendent had been without sleep for more than sixty hours. Millsom was also thinking about something else.

STANLEY PETERS was managing secretary and founder of the Jewel Merchants and Allied Trades Association, and in his private as well as official capacity had reasons for feeling anxious for the recapture of Bird.

Bird had never said no to a well-stocked jeweller's shop, and someone had certainly appeared to make a dead set at the chain of shops owned and run by Peters. Almost in successive nights his shops in Hoxton, Bermondsey, St. Pancras, Hornsey and Islington had been broken into. It was not possible to prove that these were Bird's work but the police were almost certain of it: and, significantly, the run had stopped with Bird's arrest.

Indeed, Bird had done the jobs. He had no animosity against Mr. Peters. The plain fact was that having discovered, by accident, how the warning system could be neutralized in one of the shops he had come to the sensible conclusion that it would be the same in other shops in the same chain, and he pulled off the five jobs quickly before the alarms could be changed.

Mr. Peters, did not, of course, know this and he regarded the published terms of the reward with considerable satisfaction. He had pushed it through in the face of some opposition from his committee.

"We can afford it," he said. "We'll save that much in insurance premiums alone. Besides, it looks good. We're public benefactors."

The thought of being public benefactors clearly appealed to the committee.

"Do you think the reward'll be claimed?" one of them had asked.

"Certain to be," said Peters. "The way we've put it—cash on the nail and no questions asked. Anyone who hides Bird will be a crook. And any crook will fall for this."

He was proved to be absolutely right.

ON the afternoon following the publication of the advertisement, Mr. Peters was sitting alone in his Finchley office, digesting a handsome lunch, when his confidential clerk, Jackson, announced a visitor.

"He says he must see you alone—" although there was no one else in the room the clerk lowered his voice. "About the reward."

"What sort of man is he, Jackson?"

"Oh, respectable, very, sir."

"Hmp," said Mr. Peters. "Show him in." He went and sat down behind his desk. It was the position in which he liked to receive unknown visitors, a fact which was connected with the existence of a hidden bell-push in the floor under the desk.

It was a large, soberly-dressed man who came in, eyes glinting behind old-fashioned steel glasses, and a mop of white hair which, if unobtrusively a wig, was evidently a very expensive and respectable one.

He said, "Alone, if you don't mind."

Peters gestured to the clerk, who removed himself to the downstairs office. He knew his duties in such cases. If the bell rang once, he would come back to the office. If it rang twice he went straight out and fetched a policeman.

"Well," said Peters, "I understand you've got something to tell me."

"I know where Bird is. Does that win me some money?"

"If you're right, yes."

"It's not a thing I'd be likely to make a mistake about," said the man. His voice was bubbling over with suppressed laughter. As he spoke he leaned forward, braced his legs against the desk, seized Peters by the lapels of his coat, and plucked him out of the chair, over the desk and on to the floor beyond. Then he dropped on him. One hand caught his hair and forced his head back, the other came up and covered mouth and nose.

Peters began to jerk. He was fighting for air. A baby might as well have squirmed under the hands of its mother. There was silence in the room, broken only by the soft threshing of Peters's body on the carpet.

After a very long minute Bird let go. Peters could not speak. He was hissing for breath.

"Any trouble," said Bird, "and you can try what it's like holding your breath five minutes."

Then he went to the desk, and found and disconnected the bell. The far door in the corner, he found, gave, as he had hoped, on to a flight of stairs which led straight down to the street. It was the private back door to the office.

Mr. Peters had struggled, by now, on to his knees. He had stopped moaning. He looked as ludicrous and as pitiful as a pompous little man will be likely to look when he is kneeling, on his own office carpet, in terror of his life.

Bird examined him critically. He was pleased with his work. He was particularly pleased that he had not marked his victim's face at all.

"Get up," he said. "That's right. Brush yourself down. Got a comb? Well, it doesn't matter. You haven't got enough hair to worry about. Just smooth it down. Put your glasses on straight. That's right. Now listen. Call in that old packet—your clerk, isn't he? Tell him to get moving down to the bank to pick up the reward money. Write him a cheque for it. Got a cheque book? That's right. And a pen. Steady does it—we don't want

THE HUMAN MACHINE

Keep open ears

TRUTH is no man's monopoly; and he is foolish indeed who pretends, even to himself, that he is in possession of complete wisdom—about *anything*.

We need not believe all we hear; but we should at least listen with open and unprejudiced ears. Knowledge can be gained from the most unlikely quarters. No one knows so much that he can afford to be too proud to learn some more.

by ROFFE THOMPSON

"Bless my soul, I don't know what I'd do without Germolene!"

There's no need to worry abou the child's grazed knee — Germolene will quickly soothe the smarting pain. It will draw out any hidden dirt and help it to heal quickly without danger of poisoning or inflammation. Germolene is an invaluable safeguard for all sorts of minor skin ailments and injuries. Keep a tin handy for family use. You never know when it may be needed.

Germolene

ASEPTIC OINTMENT

FOR CUTS, ABRASIONS, ECZEMA, SPOTS, RASHES AND EVERYDAY SKIN AILMENTS

1/8 & 4/- *per tin*

It soothes at a touch

Keep FRESH as a daisy

...in breath and body!

Don't even *risk* personal offence! New wonder Amplex chlorophyll deodorant tablets banish body odours . . . end bad breath in 30 seconds, whether from food, alcohol, tobacco or constitutional causes. Safe, certain, harmless. Amplex chlorophyll is nature's own purifier found in all plants and flowers. At chemists everywhere.

AMPLEX

The World's only Gordon Young U.V. Activated

CHLOROPHYLL DEODORANT TABLETS

Trial size 6d. / 30 tablets for 1/9 / 100 tablets for 5/3

NEW! AMPLEX CHLOROPHYLL TOOTH POWDER 1/-
Whiter teeth . . . Healthier mouth.

"... my catarrh, which was severe, quite negligible now"

"I have taken a full course of your Lantigen 'B,' my Catarrh, which was severe, quite negligible now." B.G.S., Farnsfield, Notts.
(Original can be inspected)

Lantigen 'B', taken like ordinary medicine, is specially prepared by skilled bacteriologists. It stimulates vital tissue cells to produce antidotes to combat and neutralise germ poisons. The Lantigen 'B' treatment costs only a few pence a day and it can be purchased at 1 guinea a bottle, plus 4/8d. P.T. Over 2,000,000 bottles sold throughout the world. Leaflet free.

... the oral vaccine treatment for

CATARRH & BRONCHITIS

Lantigen (England) Limited, Bagshot, Surrey

any trouble with your signature—"

After two efforts Bird was satisfied.

"Good enough. Call him in."

"I—really—I don't think I can go through with it. Surely you can——"

"Look," said Bird. He leaned forward and Mr. Peters's head came round with a snap. "Did you ever see a man have his face kicked in?"

"I—no——"

"You ought to. It's educational. I saw it once. Big fellow—like it might have been me—knocked another man down and jumped on him. His nose—it would have made you laugh to see it—went right into his face. Right in. Lost an eye—lucky not to lose both. Teeth all over the floor."

He was watching Mr. Peters closely as he spoke, and for a moment he thought the little man was going to be sick. He had gone white and the sweat was standing out on his forehead. Bird leant forward and slapped his face. Not hard—just as hard as a nurse might slap the face of a patient. The colour came back.

"That's right," said Bird. "Go ahead while the spirit's in you. But don't start getting ideas about there being safety in numbers. I could take the two of you with one hand tied behind my back. I'd be out of that private door of yours before anyone could get here to scrape up the bits. Go on."

"I generally ring——"

"Oh—I see." Bird leant under the desk and refixed a wire. "All right, go ahead. No private codes either."

Mr. Peters rang the bell. He rang it only once. Had Bird known it, that was the full measure of his surrender.

WHEN the clerk arrived the visitor was sitting back in a chair beside the door, smiling gently.

Mr. Peters said, in a choked voice, "Just run down to the bank and cash this for me. I want it in pound notes."

The clerk opened his eyes a little. "I'd better have a letter from you, sir," he said with a smile, "otherwise the cashier will have a fit."

Peters looked despairingly at Bird. The slight hitch had thrown him off his precarious balance.

"Better still," suggested Bird, "ask the manager to ring back Mr. Peters to confirm the cheque."

Mr. Peters nodded.

"Very good, sir," said the clerk and went out.

Bird moved powerfully across to the window. "How long to get to the bank?"

"Two minutes. It's just on the corner."

"He shouldn't have to wait long at this time of day. I'll give him five."

It was four minutes by the clock on the mantelshelf when the jangle of the telephone bell made Mr. Peters jump. He steadied himself and picked up the receiver.

"Yes—yes. It's me. That's right. In pound notes, if you wouldn't mind. A cash deal, you understand."

A voice at the other end said something and Mr. Peters said, "Thank you—it's very kind of you," and rang off. He turned to Bird with a smile. It was the smile of a nervous child, who hopes he is making a good impression.

"He forgot to take anything to put them in. The manager is lending him a case. It's quite a large amount of notes to carry."

"It won't break my back," said Bird.

There was silence until the clerk returned, and placed a suitcase on the desk. He seemed nervous; so much money appeared to have subdued him.

"They counted them at the bank," he said. "They're in bundles of fifty, if you'd like to check them."

"I'm sure that's not necessary," said Bird with a genial smile, and started for the door. He didn't quite get there, for at that moment the door burst open to admit what appeared to be several dozen policemen. Bird had really no chance at all.

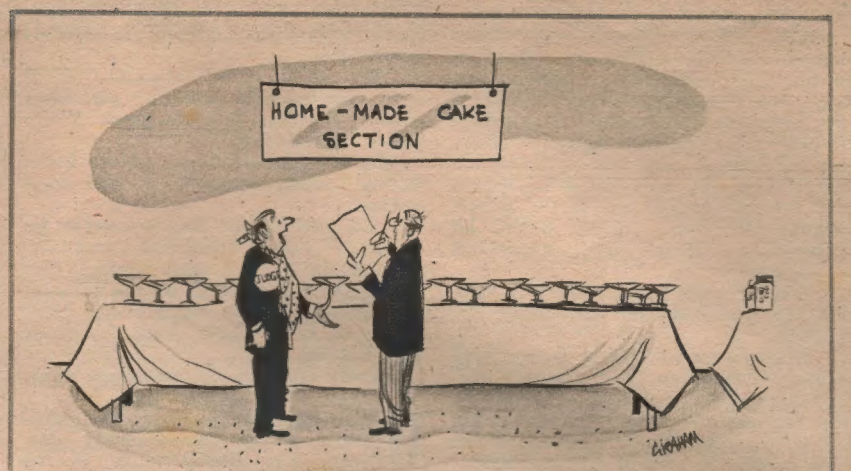
IT was three months later. Millsom stood in the passage, looking through the inspection trap. He had a creased white scar down the side of his face, and his jaw would never quite hang straight again; but he bore little malice.

He took the view that his injuries had been caused by a kind of animal; an animal it had been his business to understand and to forestall. He thought he understood the animal pretty well now. It had been his idea to keep a man at Mr. Peters's bank. It had been unfortunate that the gentleman himself could not be warned, but he could not be trusted to fake fright, and Bird, like all animals, had an astonishing instinct for sensing danger.

To trap such an animal one had to be prepared to put some very unconventional theories to the test.

Inside the cell, the big man on the bed was asleep. His mouth was relaxed into a smile.

Millsom, as he walked off for his supper, was also smiling. It was the smile of a man whose theories have been found surprisingly correct. THE END



"It's difficult to decide—they were all delightful"

MRS. CURLEY FIGHTS HER OWN GERM WAR

Continued from page 9

helps local health authorities and food firms to tighten up on hygiene.

Making people give priority to cleanliness is no easy task. A recent report says that "the majority of dishes in catering establishments are being washed in water bacteriologically the equivalent of sewage."

A doctor collected twenty cracked cups being used in various restaurants, washed them and held them for fifteen seconds in a stream of boiling water. Then he broke them down the original cracks and took swabs: every crack still swarmed with dangerous germs.

The present Food and Drugs Act makes enforcement of clean food rules difficult. It lays down that clean water must be used for washing up, but does not specify hot water. There is no law to make staff wash their hands, and food inspectors cannot often prove "dirty conditions" until someone is taken ill.

Now the Ministry is drafting a new and more stringent Act, and in the meantime 1,200 local authorities have adopted model by-laws designed to help their inspectors.

Morley Parry's technique is to show traders that cleanliness means bigger business. The sanitary inspector of a south coast resort came to the Ministry for help in making candy-floss sellers put their wares under cover. Parry remembered once seeing some candy failing to fluff up in the rain. He advised the inspector: "Tell them they could keep their floss fluffy in all weather if they had a plastic cover over their machine." It worked. Now the sellers have bigger sales and their potentially dangerous wares are kept clean.

"I asked a fish-and-chip shop proprietor in Belfast why he wrapped his orders in brown paper with his name on, instead of the newspaper most shops use," says Parry. The trader replied: "If I sell a shilling's worth of fish and chips in newspaper it looks worth elevenpence, but in my paper it looks worth one and twopence."

Cleanliness should begin at home. One expert advises that all cracked crockery should be thrown away. Prepared food should be kept as cold as possible. Washing-up water should be hot and changed frequently, and a detergent used. Dishes should be left to dry in a rack, not wiped.

"Cook The Right Amount"

As might be expected, the kitchen of Mrs. Curley, leader of Wembley's war on germs, is spotless. "I never have leftovers," she says. "I would rather throw away the remains of a meal than risk being poisoned. But I usually manage to cook just the right amount."

Mrs. Curley has now become a power in Wembley. When shopkeepers see her coming they give their counters a quick extra flip. Strangers telephone her with information, and one sent her a photograph of a cat sleeping on a pile of loaves in a baker's window. "We got an assurance from the owner that it wouldn't happen again."

Though many traders were suspicious at first, and were unwilling to pay the ten shillings a year subscription, most people now accept the Association as a necessary social amenity. The Wembley branch of one grocery chain spent £100 in redecorating the back of the shop and building an additional lavatory, before the Association would accept it as a member. "Then they suggested we covered the bacon and butter in the shop window with transparent paper. We were only too pleased to co-operate, and I'm really thankful to have the certificate," says Maurice Wemys, the manager. Certificates and signs are ceremoniously presented at local cinemas, to make the public aware of the Association and to underline its importance to the traders.

Some Wembley shopkeepers are still opposed, however. "I'd rather spend the ten shillings on soap and towels," says Robert Brown, manager of a grocery chain store's local branch. "You can run your finger under my counters any time and you won't find any dust. A little badge in my window wouldn't make me any cleaner."

Wembley's association is one of the few which are financed by the traders themselves. It has had to borrow occasionally from the local council, but has paid its debts, remaining sufficiently independent to criticize the council's own food arrangements.

Mrs. Curley's favourite hobby is watching out for dirty food habits. She says: "Outside a butcher's shop I saw meat being delivered from a van, the inside of which horrified me. I told the public health department. Now the vans are a picture."

And when a member of the Association boasted that he had installed a refrigerated display counter for the fish at a branch shop, she went to inspect it. "I found that, instead of using the glass compartment, the staff was putting the fish on the *top* of it! All I can say is, it's lucky there's someone looking out for such things." THE END

A GIRL FOR ME

Continued from page 13

said, "and kill herself." She paused for a moment and said: "I'm going to ride her down."

I stared down the chimney. It was a drop of about thirty feet. "You can't do that," I said.

"It's the only way."

"You can't do it," I said. "I don't want you to be hurt."

Her face was a pale, oval blur in the darkness. She came close to me and she must have stood on tiptoe for her face was almost on a level with my own. She kissed me full on the lips, but gently, with no show of passion and her mouth was cold.

I was taken aback and before I knew it she was running towards the mare. In the darkness I lost sight of her.

I heard them coming towards me. I could hear the mare's hooves striking the rough stone. And then they seemed to be moving away. There was a long slither and I called out. I heard the horse snort again and there was a horrible note of fear in it. I could no longer see either Brenda or the mare. The sound of their descent was terrifying. Loose stones cascaded down. Then all at once there was a cry from Brenda, an appalling clatter of moving rock and a deadly thud.

I heard the mare neigh. I called. Brenda never answered, and I went down that chimney as if it had been an easy staircase in full daylight. Except for bruising my shoulder and cutting a hand, I reached the ground unhurt. I distinguished the bulk of the mare and I began to search for Brenda.

She lay beside a rock, her chin close to a shoulder, and for one terrible moment I was afraid that her neck was broken.

I KNELT beside her and gathered her up. Her forehead was sticky with blood. I found my coat and put it round her and went to the stream and wetted my handkerchief and tied it about her head. I got some brandy into her mouth.

In an hour there should be a moon and I sat with her cradled in my arms.

The mare moved and I heard the foal run to her and begin nuzzling. Brenda's body was warm against my chest and very gently, with the tip of my fingers, I traced the outline of her jawbone. The skin was soft. I lifted each of her small, cold hands in turn and kissed them.

We sat for I don't know how long, and then there was the flicker of a movement and Brenda stirred.

"It's all right, my darling," I whispered. I didn't know what I was saying. I said whatever came into my head. Soft, silly words of comfort and endearment. Then she groaned. I held her tighter.

The moon began to rise over the massif. The light was faint and watery at first, but very welcome. I stared down at Brenda. The handkerchief was soaked with blood and her face, below it, whiter than the moon.

Carefully, I unfastened the handkerchief. There was a deep gash, about four inches long, above her brows. I felt very gingerly to see if the bone of the skull was fractured and she cried at once, then whimpered. It felt to me as if the bone was all right. Then she opened her eyes very slowly, stared up at me, smiled once and closed her eyes.

"I've got such an awful headache," she said.

But she said it softly, much as a child says that it is feeling sleepy or is in pain, but knows all the time that it will be comforted.

"The mare's all right," I said.

"I'm glad."

I knew that we would have to wait until the bleeding slowed and then I could get her up on horseback, and follow with the mare and the foal.

All at once I knew what had happened. I didn't feel strange any more or lonely. When we rode down the mountain together, we would be riding home.

THE END

FROM MY FAMILY ALBUM

The photograph on page 18 is of Dwight Eisenhower as a child.

Follow Them to a Giant Success!

MEET two fellow *John Bull* readers. On the left is a young naval officer; at the time he took up *Bullets* he was A/S/Lieut.(E) F. Bowen (26 Bickerstaffe Street, St. Helens). After trying for eight weeks, he captured the first August Tournament Prize of £1,000 for his simple yet striking *Bullet*: PLACE TO LIVE IN—PEACE—EACH OTHER'S HEARTS.

The other reader, right, is a solicitor's costing clerk in Cardiff—Mr. A. Stork (155 Gabalfa Avenue, Llandaff). He was the winner of last year's £1,000 Tournament Prize for his neat effort: ON RECOVERY'S VOYAGE — *Everything* WE "PACK," WANTED!

Who is going to be the *third* reader to win as much as £1,000 cash for a few well-chosen words in a *Bullets* August Tournament? Your name on that coupon below can supply the answer.

FINE SUMMER PRIZES FOR XWORDS!

This Way To Win

FIRST complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues below. Then, if you wish to enter *one* extra Answer to any *one, two* or *three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

Across Clues — **XWORD 799**

1. Heavy state of ground may well make difference to man who does this
5. It's sometimes a bit difficult getting anything out of one
6. Feeding is more of a problem if a young child is
7. A person who smacks his lips over bit of scandal often won't admit that he likes
9. After tiring, sleepless night, this is likely to depress you still further
11. The right colour will make one more attractive
12. There's often more in one than appears on the surface
13. There's a kind of stream that can slow up progress made by these

Down Clues

1. Cricketer who fails at first as a bowler may well become this
2. In most pubs you get this talked about the Government
3. A boxing champion might feel the sun had ceased to shine if he lost his
4. When father papers the parlour there's likely to be too much this in evidence
5. They're apt not to come off when they should do so
8. Letters are the concern of
10. They need polishing up before being put in a show

£100 1st PRIZE CASH PLUS

£25 SEASIDE HOLIDAY

(If prize shared, £25 Holiday Cash similarly divided)

AWARDS VALUE £25

amongst 1st Runners-up and up to

50 SURPRISE PARCELS

containing 20 extras to help fill your larder—one Parcel with each Runner-up Award value 10s. or over.

Up to 500 "SIGNPOST" PRIZES — one for each 2nd Runner-up

£100 AND HOLIDAY WON—XWORD 794

WINNING WORDS: ACROSS: 1, Bell. 3, Wings. 5, Reward. 6, Dove. 12, Spare. 13, Barb. 14, Tool. DOWN: 1, Bore. 2, Lead. 4, Sweep. 7, Car. 8, Race. 9, Major. 10, List. 11, Deal.

OUTRIGHT WINNER OF £100 plus £25 HOLIDAY AWARD: S. G. Ogden, 56 Lynton Road, Hillside, Southport, Lancs.

Awards value £25 for 1st Runners-up shared by 9 entrants, each of whom receives Summer Surprise Parcel in addition. Useful "Signpost" Prizes awarded to 2nd Runners-up.

WIN £100 and HOLIDAY with this COUPON

1 B		T	S	■	2	■	3	■	4	
	■	■	O	■	O	U	I	J	A	
T	■	5 L	O	■	T	■	G	■	S	
6 T		I	N	■	■	7	H	A	T	
E	■		■	■	■	■	T	E	E	
R	E	S	I	8 P	■	O	■	O	■	
■	R	■	9 M	O	■	N	I	N	10 G	
11	I	E	■	■	■	E	N	■		
■	C	A	R	T	S	■	C	O	G	
12	A	R	N	799	13	A	R	S		

CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
No.		6d.
No.		1s.
No.		2s.

(Total fee shown includes entry on Square)

Puzzle and form strictly copyright **799** Closing Postmark MON., AUG. 18

I enclose P.O. value..... No.....

Signed.....

Address.....

.....

In adjudication all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed square with one extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.). Square with one extra Answer to *two* Clues will represent *four* full Squares (Entry-fee 1s.) and Square with one extra Answer to *three* Clues will represent *eight* full Squares (Entry-fee 2s.). Use ink not pencil.

Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated August 30.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature indicates agreement to Rules.

£1,000 CASH

MUST BE WON OUTRIGHT for 2, 3 or 4 WORDS in "JOHN BULL'S" AUGUST TOURNAMENT

The most meritorious of the First Prize *Bullets* in Contests 1,846, 1,847, 1,848, 1,849 and 1,850 will bring its sender £1,000 CASH—a £500 First Prize plus £500 Tournament Award.

£500 FIRST PRIZE

£50, £25, £10, £9, £8, £7, £6, 2 of £5, 10 of £2 10s., 50 "Bullets" Seasons value 10s.

1,500 "GOOD SHOT" AWARDS

"3-DINNER" BONUSES

Whole Roast Chicken, Ham and Tongue (all tinned) accompany each of the 20 chief prizes won with *Bullet* which was one of four or more on single coupon or plain-paper entry sheet.

HOW TO WIN

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

Add 2, 3 or 4 Words to any of these "EXAMPLES"

Grandma Britannia
None But The Brave
From Wisdom's Well
Just Like Winston
Prize To Be Won
Life Begins At Forty, So
Excuses
Invention Of The Devil
Unfriendly Act
Among Thieves
Calm Before The Storm
Melted
With A Dazzling Smile
Alfie's Frog
Smuggled In
He Rang The Bell And
Ready To Run
Man With A Pitchfork
Groomed For Stardom
At The "Dog And Duck"

Incomplete "Examples" —see instructions above

We.....Today, But
.....Of The East
Covered With.....
On The.....Side
Didn't Stop To.....
If It Weren't For.....

NOTE.—You may enclose *Bullets* and Xword entries in same envelope covered by single P.O. for combined entry-fee. Mark envelope "Combined," top left-hand corner.

POST ENTRY

"Bullets" 1,847 (or Xword 799), "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.)

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit—the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are full rate. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests (in *Bulletin* and *Gazette*, dated September 6, and in JOHN BULL dated September 13), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

"Bullets" Winners 1,842

FIRST PRIZE, £500 plus Swiss Holiday for Two: Mrs. E. I. Dyer, Little House, Gosfield, Halstead, Essex:

Doesn't Make Sense
"Long Live—" *Overworking* Queen!

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£25: R. Walburn, 12 Elm Avenue, Bullamoor Road, Northallerton: KNOWS HIS STUFF—WHOEVER'S DISGUISING *My* OPPORTUNITIES!

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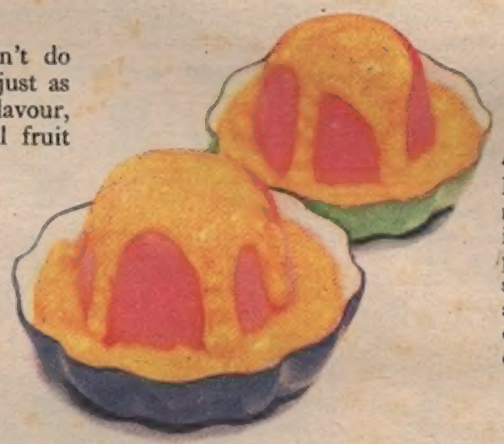

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